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ABSTRACT

This book is intended to assist anyone who is interested in the quality of life afforded persons with moderate and severe disabilities, including educators, residential providers, vocational rehabilitation personnel, social staff, parents, and advocates. The first section, which deals with the reasons why transition is needed, covers the following topics: major federal legislation addressing transition services provided under the auspices of special and vocational education and vocational rehabilitation, legislation and initiatives versus practice, ways of narrowing the gap between theory and practice, the role of transition services as the missing link between education and adulthood, and components of the transition model (residential environment, employment, and social and interpersonal networks). The second chapter examines ways of helping moderately and severely disabled persons increase their productivity, independence, and participation in the community and workplace. It includes information on high school programs, curriculum development models, integrated school systems, and community-based instruction. The third chapter covers the "players" and procedures entailed in planning the transition process, including the core transition team and methods of individualizing and evaluating the process. The array of available residential, vocational, recreation/leisure, and community-at-large services is described in the next chapter, which deals with the outcomes of the transition process. Finally, process and product/outcome barriers are addressed in a concluding chapter on barriers to transition planning. Appendixes include a parent/guardian transition questionnaire, follow-up survey, and format for organizing individual transition objectives. (MN)

Transitioning Persons

with Moderate and Severe Disabilities from School to Adulthood: What Makes It Work?

Jill Wheeler

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By

Jill D. Wheeler

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Preface

This book was written for anyone who has an interest in the quality of life afforded persons with moderate and severe disabilities. Among its readers should be educators, residential providers, vocational rehabilitation personnel, social service staff, parents and advocates. Much of the content is derived from my experience as a special educator, a vocational trainer, a university instructor, and most currently a Supported Employment Consultant with the *Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. In each of these roles, I have seen systems fail the very individuals they were intended to serve. Unfortunately, when "systems" fail, people are affected. Such is the case for thousands of young people who are exiting special education programs each year and entering the adult service arena. The past failures of both public school and adult service systems is reflected in the paucity of experiences, opportunities and options available to these individuals as adults.

This book suggests methods and procedures to reduce the frequency and magnitude of "system" failures. In so doing, the goals of transition efforts have been broadened. Much of the available literature on transition focuses on employment outcomes only. Employment, however, is only one indicator of successful adult adjustment. Transition efforts need to encompass the recreation, community, residential, and social life spaces of individuals as well...for none of us live by work alone. It is only through such a multi-faceted approach that transition efforts will perceptively improve the quality of life for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities.

*While Ms. Wheeler is an employee of the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the opinions expressed in this book do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of that agency.

Table of Contents

Page

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: Why Transition is Needed 3

- Transition and Legislation 3
- Legislation and Initiatives Versus Practice 6
- Narrowing the Gap Between "Theory" and "Practice" 6
- The Missing Link 7
- Components of the Transition Model 10

Chapter 2: Building a Firm Foundation 11

- The High School Foundation 12
- Curriculum 12
- Models of Curriculum Development 13
- Integrated School System 22
- Community-Based Instruction 26

Chapter 3: Planning the Transition Process 33

- When to Start and Why 33
- Who are the "Players" in the Transition Process? 35
- What are the Roles of the Players? 36
- The Core Transition Team 36
- Individualizing the Transition Process 39
- The Individualized Transition Plan 40
- Evaluating the Transition Process 43

Chapter 4: Outcomes of the Transition Process 45

- The Residential Array of Services 48
- The Vocational Array of Services 49
- The Recreation/Leisure and Community-at-Large Array of Services 52

Chapter 5: Barriers to Transition Planning 55

- Process Barriers 55
- Product or Outcome Barriers 57

Chapter 6: Transition-A Case Study 59

References 67

Appendices 73

Introduction

Kate is 25 years old. She is living at home with her parents and a younger brother. On weekday mornings, she is picked up at her house by a large bus with the words "New Hope" boldly displayed along the sides. She is transported to the local sheltered workshop where she spends the day on a variety of tasks. Sometimes Kate does assembly work. Sometimes she sands furniture parts. Sometimes she attends classes at the workshop intended to teach her social skills or to acquaint her with different types of community jobs. Sometimes she goes bowling with the rest of the workers and a few staff members. Kate is moderately mentally handicapped.

Before Kate began attending the New Hope workshop, she attended school in a nearby community. Her school was a "special" one because Kate has exceptional needs. She spent her days and years learning things like how to attend, to match and sort things by color, to label things in her environment, and to speak to others in complete sentences. Kate used to love going with her classmates on field trips into the community around the holidays. When Kate graduated, she spent six months at home before New Hope accepted her into their program. During most of this time, Kate spent her days watching T.V.

Kate receives about $450.00 a month through a combination of Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Her paychecks from New Hope average about $15.00 per week. When Kate first started at New Hope almost four years ago, she was placed in the pre-vocational workgroup based upon the assessment that had been conducted when she was first referred. Kate still works in the pre-vocational program at New Hope.

Margie is also 25 years old. She is also moderately mentally handicapped. Margie is living in an apartment with two other young women. One of Margie's roommates is moderately disabled like herself and the other is nondisabled. Margie shares responsibility with her two roommates for grocery shopping, planning and preparing meals, housekeeping, and laundry. During the week, Margie walks three blocks to the bus stop and waits for the city bus to take her to a nearby restaurant where she works five mornings a week setting up the tables and preparing items for the salad bar. She works twenty hours a week and is paid minimum wage. In the afternoons, Margie walks to her second job at a non-profit service organization. Here she volunteers her time doing clerical work.

Margie graduated from school when she was 21. By then she had had several community job experiences as part of her middle and high school training. She had learned how to independently ride the city bus, to access and use community environments such as grocery stores, restaurants, libraries, banks, movie theaters, and recreational facilities. She had developed friendships with both disabled and nondisabled peers while in school and would often spend time with them during evenings and weekends. These friendships have continued since she graduated and new friendships have developed at her two jobs. Kate and Margie are leading very different lives. One is being a productive member of society. The other continues to be a drain on society's resources. One is experiencing life as a semi-independent adult while the other continues to live a life characterized by child-like dependency. One is an integrated member of society. The other remains to a large extent segregated from society.

It has been slightly more than ten years since Public Law 94-142 took effect. Margie and Kate represent the first "graduating class" of students with disabilities served by legally mandated and federally funded educational services. Quite clearly, P.L. 94-142 was not enough to assure a smooth and satisfactory transition to adult life for all young persons with disabilities. Many variables have been manipulated to create the two lifestyles described above. For Kate, the variables were not manipulated very well.

The purpose of this book will be to examine the variables affecting the smooth and effective transition from school to adulthood for individuals like Kate and Margie. Chapter 1 will discuss what is meant by transition, the origin of the conceptual framework itself and why models are in need of being developed. Efforts will be made to clearly delineate what are the critical components of the transitional process and how they may be achieved for individuals with disabilities who are preparing to graduate from special education programs. Chapter 2 will provide an indepth description of those dimensions of school program that are critical for effective transitioning. Chapter 3 will identify the different "players" in the transition process and discuss the various independent and overlapping roles that they need to assume. The outcomes of effective transitioning will be discussed in Chapter 4. Once the ideal transition process is described for readers, Chapter 5 will offer a discussion of common barriers that inhibit the development of effective transition processes. Finally, a case study will be provided in Chapter 6 that describes in detail the transition process for an individual with moderate disabilities.

This book will serve several purposes. The first will be to suggest to readers that effective transition from school to adulthood for individuals with disabilities will not merely "happen." Transition needs to be programmed for in much the same way that generalization of acquired skills does with this same population. Secondly, the reader will come to realize the consequences of not developing transition strategies. This waste of human potential can no longer be ignored. Thirdly, readers will learn that the skills required to plan for effective transitioning are not contained within some mysterious discipline, attainable by only a few. Rather, the critical skills can be learned by all the "players"...school personnel, parents, and adult service providers. These newly developed skills can operationalize and formalize transition plans for individuals with disabilities who are leaving school and entering the adult arena.

Chapter 1

Why Transition is Needed

Transition and Legislation

During the past few decades, legislation has been enacted to enhance the opportunities for persons with disabilities to access and participate in society. Some of the laws that have been passed impact directly on individuals while they are in school. Others are intended to guarantee opportunities as adults. Some represent "entitlement" programs while others introduce "eligibility" programs. Entitlement programs are automatically available to all who qualify. There are no criteria established for inclusion beyond the existence of a disability. Entitlement programs are relatively rare among adult service providers. Eligibility programs are those which establish criteria by which individuals are to be included. Individuals are selected very deliberately according to some pre-established set of guidelines. Other individuals may be excluded from receiving services because they are deemed "ineligible" according to the established guidelines. Even though individuals may qualify for services through an eligibility program, there is no guarantee that she/he will receive services. Limited funding, local priorities/discretion and other concerns often keep individuals who qualify for services from actually receiving them.

It is important to review some of the more expansive legislation in order to understand what protections are in place for persons with disabilities in this country. Although the following summaries are not intended to be comprehensive in nature, they provide salient content and suggest how the legislation has influenced the provision of meaningful services to persons with disabilities, both in the school setting and into adulthood.

(P.L. 94-142) The Education for all Handicapped Children Act

This law requires that public schools provide free and appropriate public education for children with handicaps, ages 5-21. This includes special education, related services such as speech, occupational, and physical therapy, regular education, and specially designed vocational education if needed. The law also mandates that handicapped and nonhandicapped students be educated together to the maximum extent possible.

The content and subsequent passage of P.L. 94-142 was reinforced by other legislation, court decisions and strong parent support. As an entitlement program, it set the stage for expanding the quantity and quality of opportunities available to persons with disabilities. Its intent was to maximize the potential of disabled persons by encouraging the provision of services in the least restrictive environment.

(P.L. 98-199) Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983

The design and passage of P.L. 98-199 resulted as shortcomings in the original P.L. 94-142 were identified. The major foci of the new program initiatives are funding and support for secondary education and transitional services for students with

disabilities, ages 12-22. The rationale for this section of the Act was stated as follows:

> ...the Subcommittee (on the handicapped) recognizes the overwhelming paucity of effective programming for these handicapped youth, which eventually accounts for unnecessarily large numbers of handicapped adults who become unemployed and therefore dependent on society. These youth historically have not been adequately prepared for the changes and demands of life after high school. In addition, few, if any, are able to access or appropriately use traditional transitional services. Few services have been designed to assist handicapped young people in their efforts to enter the labor force or attain their goals of becoming self-sufficient adults, and contributing members of our society. (P.L. 98-199, Sec. 626)

This Act authorizes funding for research, training and demonstration in the following areas:

- development of strategies and techniques for transition to independent living;
- establishment of demonstration models emphasizing vocational, transitional, and job placement services;
- provision of demographic studies on numbers and types of handicapping conditions of students and services required;
- initiation of collaborative models between education agencies and adult service agencies; and
- development of procedures for evaluation of programs in the area of transition. (P. McCarthy, J. Iverson, M. Barcus & S. Moon, 1985, Project TIE, Vol. 1, p. 5)

This entitlement legislation recognizes the need for transitional services and provides a degree of financial support to encourage their development.

(P.L. 98-524) Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984

The Carl D. Perkins Act amended the Vocational Education Act (P.L. 94-482) of 1976. The intent of the Carl Perkins Act was to expand upon and enhance vocational education programs for disadvantaged and handicapped individuals. Ten percent of funds made available to states for purposes of providing vocational training must be set aside for individuals who are handicapped in order for them to participate in vocational education. More specifically, each state:

> ...shall use the portion of its allotment available for this part in any fiscal year for handicapped individuals only for the Federal share of expenditures limited to supplemental or additional staff, equipment, materials, and services not provided to other individuals in vocational education that are essential for handicapped individuals to participate in vocational education. (Transition: Minnesota Transition Training Manual, Minnesota Dept. of Education, p. 15)

In addition, this act mandates that equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities must be provided to the same extent as to nonhandicapped individuals. Portions of P.L. 94-142 must be incorporated into vocational programs offered to individuals with handicaps. These include: 1) providing activities and programs in the least restrictive environments and 2) including vocational activities and programs as a component of the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Finally, the Act mandates that every student with a disability and his/her parents be informed of opportunities in vocational education and eligibility for enrollment prior to ninth grade or one year before these services are provided in school.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112)

The main intent of this legislation was to authorize federal support for training persons with mental and physical disabilities in order for them to be employed. Whereas P.L. 94-142 and P.L. 98-199 represent entitlement programs, the Rehabilitation Act established eligibility programs. A "handicapped individual" is defined in the Act as one who:

(1) has a physical or mental disability which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial handicap to employment; and
(2) can reasonably be expected to benefit from vocational rehabilitation services provided.

Amendments to the Act in 1978 (P.L. 95-602) established a major new array of services. Among the priorities set were services to severely handicapped individuals, including independent living. The Rehabilitation Act was again amended in 1984 (P.L. 98-221) and a new sector of discretionary programs focusing on transition for severely handicapped individuals was created at this time.

Section 504 of the original Act has often been described as a "bill of rights" for persons with disabilities. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of a handicap in any private or public program that receives federal funds. The message it carried to preschool, elementary, and secondary schools was that the individual needs of students with handicaps were to be met as adequately as were those of nonhandicapped students.

In addition to these pieces of legislation, recent federal initiatives have mandated that a priority be placed on transition and employment of persons with severe disabilities. The Office of Special Education ad Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), U. S. Department of Education has come forth with The Transition of Youth with Disabilities Priority and the Supported Employment Initiative. The first establishes transition from school to working life for all individuals with disabilities as a national priority. The second defines and provides funding for supported employment programs. Supported employment, as defined in the OSERS initiative, is an innovative way of providing community-based vocational training, placement, and support to individuals with severe disabilities.

A third major program comes in the form of an Employment Initiative from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services; Office of Human Development Services. This initiative establishes as a funding priority the employment of persons with developmental disabilities, and provides funds for a national public awareness campaign to businesses for the purpose of increasing interest in employing persons with developmental disabilities.

Legislation and Initiatives Versus Practice

Quite clearly, the framework has been laid through federal initiatives and legislation to increase the likelihood that persons with disabilities will become productive and valued members of society. Unfortunately, "legislation" plus "initiatives" does not always equal "practice" and for many individuals with disabilities, the goals of independence, productivity and participation remain illusive. Studies conducted by the U. S. Commission on Civil Right (1983) and the U. S. Bureau of the Census (1982) revealed that between 50 and 80 percent of working age adults with disabilities are unemployed. For the 250,000 to 300,000 students with disabilities that leave public-supported education programs each year, the picture is not an appealing one.

School districts across the country have begun conducting follow-up studies on students with disabilities who have graduated from their educational programs. One such study on 462 students with handicaps from Vermont schools revealed that 55 percent of the interviewed sample were in nonsubsidized jobs, with only two-thirds of those jobs being full-time (Hasazi et al., 1985). In Washington, similar data were collected on former high school students in special education programs. Only 59 percent were found to be employed and 62 percent continued to live at home with their families (Edgar et al., 1985). In a statewide follow-up study of special education students in Colorado, approximately two-thirds of the graduates were working, but their salaries were at or below minimum wage. Of those who responded, two-thirds were working at jobs that were less than half-time and 64 percent were residing with their parents (Mithaug et al., 1985). The results of a study conducted in Virginia indicated that less than 12 percent of individuals with moderate, severe, or profound mental retardation were employed in real jobs throughout several geographical areas of the state (Wehman et al., 1985). Wheeler et al. (1983) found that 58 percent of moderately and severely handicapped students graduating from the special education program in DeKalb, Illinois from 1978 to 1982 were still living at home with their parents and 93 percent were either in sheltered employment or unemployed.

Narrowing the Gap Between "Theory" and "Practice"

The gap that exists between "theory" and "practice" needs to be narrowed if persons with moderate and severe disabilities are to maximize the benefits of the entitlements given to them through P.L. 94-142 and subsequent pieces of legislation. Careful examination of the follow-up studies and other investigations suggested that the lack of success experienced by those individuals leaving public schools and entering the adult arena is attributable to two factors. First, many graduates face significant shortages in community vocational and residential service programs. One study conducted in Oregon reported that as many as 23 percent of the students with severe handicaps who required some adult day program at graduation were on waiting lists up to five years later (Brodsky, 1983). Another study from the same state found that waiting lists for community-based residential services consisted of 300 persons and 202 persons for vocational or day programs (McDonnell & Wilcox, 1983). McDonnell et al. (1986) reported that of the 34 administrators of state vocational programs that they interviewed, 91 percent indicated that they had substantial waiting lists for vocational services. Ninety-seven percent of the participating residential facilities participating in this same study reported similar information.

The second barrier to maximizing the potential of many individuals who leave the public school system and enter the adult arena is the inability of existing vocational and residential service programs to produce meaningful outcomes with the individuals

they serve, particularly those who are more severely handicapped. McDonnell et al. (1986) reports that:

> Existing community service programs are characterized by low wages, limited access to community environments, isolation for nonhandicapped peers, and little movement to less restrictive service programs. The absence of effective adult service programs has created a cruel irony for young adults who have stayed in their own communities to attend school. The goal of these programs was to provide education and training that would increase the independence and participation of these individuals in the community as adults. Unfortunately instead of having access to service programs that will maximize the benefits of their educational entitlement, most graduates will encounter the same limited range of adult service programs that were available to their peers a decade earlier who typically received no comprehensive education or training. (p.54)

The Missing Link

It seems clear that what is needed to bring theory and practice closer together is not more legislation or federal initiatives. Rather, efforts must be made to operationalize the missing link between school and adulthood. The missing link has been conceptualized in many different ways but has come under the generic heading of "Transition."

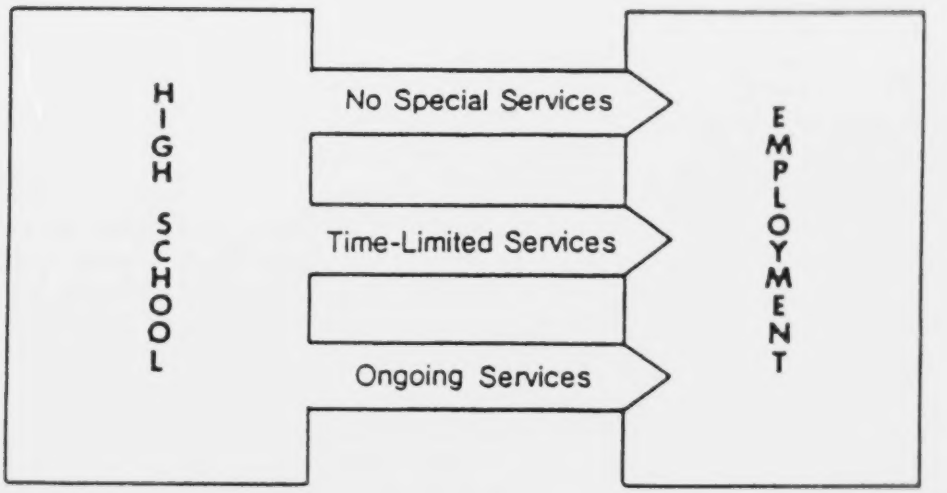
Efforts to define transition oftentimes focuses on only one goal...employment. Madeline Will (1984), Assistant Secretary for the U. S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) defines transition as:

> ...an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment. Transition is a period that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional postsecondary education or adult services, and the initial years in employment.

Will identified and discussed three "bridges" that are intended to provide the link between the structure and security of school and the complexity of adult life. Her transition model is illustrated in Figure 1.

The first "bridge," most often utilized by nonhandicapped or mildly handicapped students, requires no specialized services to find and maintain employment. These individuals usually find employment through very traditional means (e.g., newspaper ads, employment agencies, friends, relatives, word of mouth). The second "bridge" is characterized by the type of services most often offered by vocational rehabilitation services in the past. Individuals are aided in finding jobs that match their interests and aptitudes and may be offered specialized training and/or financial incentives to assist them in their efforts. The assistance provided is of a time-limited nature, however, and support is generally removed within months after job stability has been established. The third "bridge" is characterized by the innovative approach to employment for more severely disabled individuals called Supported Employment. This process of transition will be discussed in more detail later in the text. The ongoing support which makes up the third bridge in Will's model is most often associated with individuals who are moderately or severely disabled. It should be noted, however, that all three of Will's bridges lead to only one place...employment.

Figure 1. OSERS Transition Model.



In Wehman's (1984) definition, transition is again defined only as it relates to a vocational outcome, objective of transition is to arrange for those opportunities and services that will support successful adult living... (Wilcox & Bellamy, 1982, p. 221)

Those objecting to this equation that has "successful transition" on one side and "employment" on the other, do so based on some contrary evidence contained in recent research. Halpern (1985) evaluated the transition of individuals with disabilities in four states and gathered information relative to the vocational, residential, and interpersonal adjustment of each person. Intercorrelations were, for the most part, nonexistent between employment status and variables representing the other two dimensions of community adjustment (i.e., residential and interpersonal adjustment). His results raise some interesting questions concerning the scope of transition efforts. What are the results likely to be if transition efforts are aimed at only a single dimension of community adjustment (e.g., employment)?

Halpern's research demonstrates that success in one area (or "pillar") will not guarantee success in the remaining two. We can all probably think of individuals who have been transitioned into successful community-based employment upon graduation only to lead very isolated and lonely lives in a restrictive residential setting once their work day is finished. There may well be other individuals who are living in a supported apartment leading a very normalized lifestyle at home yet attending a sheltered workshop for seven hours each day.

Halpern has offered a revised model of transition that expands upon those set forth by Will, Wehman, and others. In this revised model, the bridges to adulthood are the same as Will's. Where the bridges are leading, however, has changed. Rather than leading to employment only, Halpern's bridges lead to successful community adjustment. The revised model suggests that living successfully and happily in one's community, and not merely employment, should be the primary target of transitional

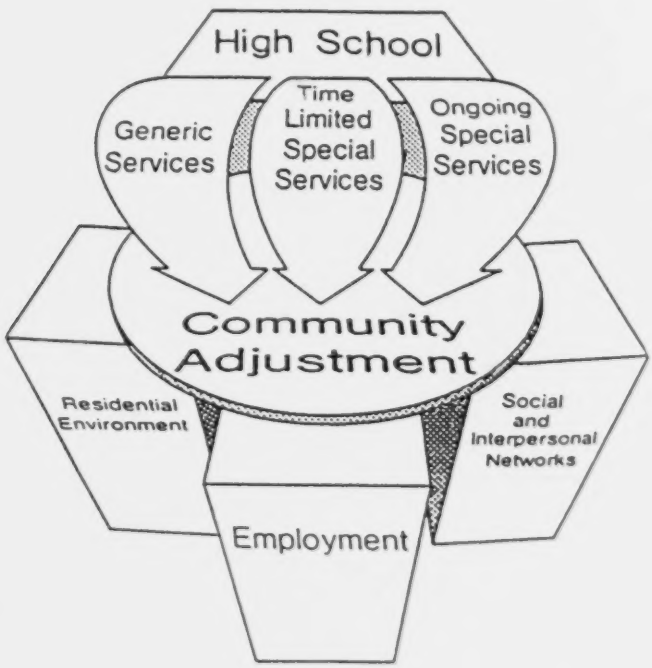
services. Included in successful community adjustment are "...the quality of a person's residential environment and the adequacy of his or her social and interpersonal network" (Halpern, 1985, p. 480). These two additional pillars included in Halpern's model are seen as being equally important to successful community living as is employment. When one pillar is in danger of collapse, the remaining two may not be far behind. The residential environment that a young adult with disabilities transitions into may have the same degree of complexity as the vocational placement. The degree to which the residential environment is satisfactory may depend on such variables as the quality and safety of the neighborhood in which the home is located, the opportunities that are available to engage in normal, routine activities (e.g., grocery shopping, eating out, using public transportation) and the availability of community and recreational facilities.

The third pillar, which Halpern labels "social and interpersonal network" is seen as perhaps the most important dimension of all for it includes:

> ...major dimensions of human relationships such as daily communications, self-esteem, family support, emotional maturity, friendship, and intimate relationships. (p.481)

Figure 2 illustrates Halpern's revised transition model. The three pillars are depicted as bearing an equal proportion of the "weight" of successful community adjustment.

Figure 2. Revised Transition Model.



(From Halpern, A.S. (1985). Transition: A look at the foundation. Exceptional Children, 51, 481.)

Components of the Transition Model

If transition is indeed the missing link between the safety and structure offered by the schools and the opportunities and risks of adult life (Will, 1984), then service providers must broaden their views of what it includes. We can no longer continue to focus our efforts on transitioning students with disabilities only into employment. As Halpern has pointed out, there is more to successful community living than work, and we cannot assume that success in vocational endeavors will automatically lead to success and fulfillment in other areas. Rather, transition efforts must be focused specifically on each of the three "pillars" (employment, residential environment, and social and interpersonal networks) if the desired goal of community adjustment is to be achieved.

Transition is both a product and a process. The product of effective transitioning should be successful community adjustment. The process of transitioning involves determining what types and levels of support are needed to assure individuals the most normalized lifestyle possible. Wehman (1984) has suggested that successfully transitioning individuals from school to the adult arena is not a one-step process. Rather, transitioning is a three-step movement that involves: (1) input and foundation, (2) process, and (3) outcome. The Input stage refers to the educational foundation that is laid for individuals during the time they spend in school, particularly during the high school years. The Process stage refers to the planning and implementation of formal individualized transition plans, the utilization of consumer input and the development of interagency cooperation and coordination. The final Outcome stage refers not only to vocational placements, but to outcomes having to do with residential placements, community integration/utilization and leisure-time opportunities as well.

Chapter 2

Building a Firm Foundation

For too many years, programs serving the educational needs of moderately and severely handicapped students have not been held accountable for effecting any type of meaningful change. The short and long term outcomes of a public school education for moderately and severely handicapped persons have not traditionally been placed under the same type of scrutiny that they have for nonhandicapped individuals. Most school systems "track" their nonhandicapped graduates. They know how many of their graduates from any given year enter colleges or universities, how many go on to technical institutions or trade schools, how many enter blue collar or white collar occupations. Some school districts may even be able to provide average annual earnings of recent classes and a summary of the types of jobs that are currently being held by graduates. School districts have scores on the SAT and other similar tests for their nonhandicapped students which provide a barometer of how well their school is preparing students for life in a competitive society.

It is assumed that the school system will have a meaningful impact on the lives of the nonhandicapped students for whom they have provided an education. It is expected that students who leave the school system after receiving more than a decade of publicly supported education will be significantly different than when they entered the system. The expectation is that nonhandicapped students who graduate from high school are more productive, more independent, and are able to participate to a greater degree in society than when they entered school at age five.

These same goals of <u>productivity,</u> <u>independence,</u> and <u>participation</u> have not traditionally been sought or measured in educational programs offered to moderately and severely handicapped individuals. We don't read about how many graduates of a particular special education class have found employment. We have no idea of how many individuals are able to move into group homes or supported apartments when they leave the school system. We have no reliable measures of whether graduates are any more independent in accessing and utilizing their community than when they entered school. In short, we have not traditionally been concerned with the same types of outcomes for students with moderate and severe disabilities who exit the school system as we have been for nonhandicapped students.

Until very recently, the focus has been more on process than outcomes. Were Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) written in a timely fashion? Were multidisciplinary teams meeting every three years to review students' programs? Were staff adequately trained to provide services to their assigned students? No one was asking outcome questions. Where do our students go when they exit the school system? Do students look any different after more than a decade of public education than they did when they came to us at age five...or three...or birth? Is all the money, talent, energy, and time being put into these students resulting in any meaningful change? Are we having an impact on the quality of student lives, on their levels of productivity, independence, and participation in society?

For those school systems that <u>did</u> choose to ask outcome-related questions, the answers were very depressing. Follow-up studies of special education graduates conducted in states such as Wisconsin, Illinois, Vermont, Washington, Colorado, and Virginia told a story of money, energy, and talent not well spent. Students with

moderate and severe disabilities were not leaving the school system and entering the work force to become productive members of their society. They had not acquired the skills that would allow them to live more independent, normalized lives apart from their parents or other family members. They were not participating more actively or more independently in the services offered in their communities. Individuals with moderate and severe disabilities were not looking all that different when they graduated at age 21 than when they entered the system. It was no wonder that adult service systems were not providing opportunities that allowed for greater productivity, independence, and participation.

The High School Foundation

In describing transition as a bridge between school and adult life, Will (1984) stresses that any bridge requires not only a solid span but a secure foundation at either end as well. The type of learning opportunities available to moderately and severely disabled youth while they are in school, and particularly during their high school years, can have a significant impact on not only the transition process itself, but on the outcomes of that process as well.

During the past several years, critical components of educational programs for moderately and severely handicapped students have been identified. Before a discussion of the transition process can have any meaning, these key components must be identified and discussed. Successive follow-up studies conducted with graduating classes in Madison, Wisconsin (VanDeventer et al., 1981) suggest that modifications in high school programming can affect not only the transition process but also the outcomes experienced by students leaving the school system and entering the adult arena. The studies were conducted over a period of years when the high school programs were becoming more and more focused on preparing students for increased productivity, independence and participation in adulthood. The quality and quantity of opportunities available to students upon graduation, particularly in the vocational arena, were substantially affected by the program changes that had taken place in the schools. The quality of the educational program can affect the quality of life experienced as an adult.

Bates et al. (1981) have identified three critical characteristics contributing to effective programming for moderately and severely handicapped youth: (1) a functional curriculum, (2) an integrated service delivery system, and (3) a community-based instructional program. In concert, these three components can form the strong foundation for meaningful transition from school to adulthood.

Curriculum

State-of-the-art curriculum planning for moderately and severely handicapped students looks very different from when these individuals first won the right to receive a free and appropriate public school education. Once the task of securing the basic right to an education in a setting that was most normal and least restrictive was won, the emphasis turned to developing and refining the "how to" technology. That is, now that these individuals were in schools, how were they going to be taught? Several years were spent investigating which methods were most effective for assessing and instructing this difficult-to-teach population of students. Very little effort was spent in determining what should be taught.

Models of Curriculum Development

As the technology of "how to teach" became refined, models began emerging around the issue of curriculum content. While several different models have emerged during the last decade, they all seem to encompass one of four approaches: (1) developmental, (2) early academic content, (3) eliminative, or (4) demands of adult life.

The first, and perhaps the most prevalent is the developmental approach. This approach to developing curricular content focuses on the students' mental age or intelligence quotient (MA or IQ) as the crucial element in determining what should be taught and in what order. The developmental model relies on normal child development as the referent for curricular and programmatic decisions. This model has been used most often in determining the content and sequence of instruction for very young children and mildly handicapped individuals. The developmental approach to developing curricular content relies heavily on the "readiness" notion. It regards the process of learning as a vertical hierarchy whereby individuals learn new skills and concepts in a set sequence or order. Skills cannot be learned and, therefore, attempts should not be made to teach them, until individuals are ready for them...i.e., have acquired all the prerequisite skills. Prerequisite skills are identified as those which may be components of the target skill or those which typically emerge in nonhandicapped children before the specific targeted skill.

An example offered by Wilcox and Bellamy (1982) illustrates how the developmental model can affect curriculum design:

> ...Thus, a teacher may refrain from toilet training a child and instead work on stacking rings on a spindle because the latter is typically mastered at an earlier age than toilet training. (p. 25)

The developmental approach as it is applied to curriculum for disabled individuals assumes the following:

1) normal development is necessary development:

2) normal development is the most efficient form of development

3) handicapped individuals are merely "slow learners" and will eventually catch up, given enough time; and

4) attempts to teach skills outside of the developmental sequence will result in fragmentation.

The shortcomings of a developmental approach to curriculum development for moderately and severely handicapped students becomes acutely apparent with high school-age individuals, although it is in evidence with younger students as well:

1. A developmentally-based curriculum is generally organized into areas corresponding to normal child development (e.g., cognitive, language, motor, social, self-help). Skills are taught in these same "compartments." Cognitive lessons are presented from 9:00-9:30, language from 9:30-10:00, motor skills from 10:00-10:30, and so on. Dividing learning in this way does not coincide with the way skills need to be integrated into the students' daily lives.

None of us use motor skills only during circumscribed times of the day...or language...or social skills. Rather we integrate them all day long in everything we do. In the developmental approach to learning, the burden of integrating skills in a meaningful and useful way is placed on the student. Unfortunately, one of the characteristics that is common among handicapped individuals is their inability to generalize information across people, places, and language cues. A second characteristic is their inability to integrate information. A student who learns to tell time using a large cardboard clock in the classroom may not be able to display the same skills when they are at home wondering when their favorite TV program comes on. The question asking lessons conducted by the speech and language clinician in his/her therapy room may not transfer to the home setting when the student needs to ask parents or siblings when their program comes on.

2. Developmental curriculum is most often implemented following a diagnostic assessment of students using standardized instruments. The purpose of such an assessment, which often times is also developmentally based, is to determine the age or intelligence quotient for the individual. The results of these assessments are used to determine where the deficits are and in what order the teacher should proceed to teach to those deficits. The developmental approach encourages teachers to continue instruction aimed at the student's mental age or IQ rather than their chronological age. As moderately and severely handicapped students get older, their mental ages often remain very young. The skills they need as an adolescent, however, to function independently with same-age peers and adults are vastly different than those that were needed as a young child.

   With a developmental approach, secondary age students are far less likely to be taught skills that are functional and appropriate to their chronological needs. If skills do not appear on the assessment instrument or if the student is assessed as being "not ready for" a particular skill, then it is unlikely that there will be an attempt made to teach that skill. The <u>need</u> for that skill in the student's life becomes secondary to its location in the normal developmental sequence of learning.

3. Under the developmental approach, alternative methods of performance are not encouraged or likely to be developed. If a student is not able to express his/herself verbally in a coherent manner, for example, she/he will continue to receive speech and language training aimed at normal expressive language performance. This may go on for several years with very minimal signs of functional improvement. Rather than designing an alternative mode of communication (e.g., picture or written communication book, signing) to use in conjunction with the continued attempts to reach "normalcy," the student continues to be thought of as a slow learner and continues to exhibit nonfunctional communication skills.

4. The developmental approach to devising and implementing curriculum assumes an unlimited time for instruction. Given the instructional technology available today, it is conceivable that we could teach persons with moderate and severe disabilities all the skills acquired by nonhandicapped individuals...given the right amount of time.

   Unfortunately, time runs out for many individuals leaving the schools who have been instructed under the developmental model. They enter a complex

and competitive adult arena where they are no longer entitled to the kind of programs that were guaranteed under P. L. 94-142. Educators do not have unlimited time for instruction and cannot assume that skills will continue to be systematically taught once students graduate and become the responsibility of adult service providers.

While adherence to the developmental approach for curriculum development has some merit when moderately and severely handicapped students are in the elementary years, it looses its usefulness by the time students enter middle and high school. It perpetuates the notion of this population as eternal children and slow learners who only need time to catch up to their nonhandicapped peers.

The second approach that has emerged as a source for curricular content is similar to the developmental approach. It is one based on either early academic content or on a watered-down version of the same-age curriculum offered to nonhandicapped students. The assumption in utilizing this approach is that by teaching the same "basic skills" (e.g., traditional academic skills) as nonhandicapped students learn, the same outcomes will be realized. Realizing that handicapped students are indeed slow learners, the "normal" curriculum may be simplified, shortened, expanded upon, and/or modified in other ways to accommodate the special learners. Oftentimes, the regular curriculum is modified once for the mildly handicapped, modified once more for the moderately handicapped, and watered down once more for the more severely handicapped. Anyone who enjoys the art of cooking or baking knows the result of watering down a recipe too much. There is very little substance left to work with. The same is true when curriculum is developed using early academic content or by modifying same-age high school curricular content for use with moderately and severely handicapped students. The same shortcomings as were delineated for the developmental approach can be found in this strategy. Providing students with curriculum content developed through both approaches does very little to positively affect the opportunities and quality of life afforded them upon graduation.

The third approach, more of an ideology than a method for developing curriculum, has emerged as an underpinning of educational programs during the last decade. The eliminative model suggests that behaviors that are judged to be inappropriate or maladaptive must be eliminated from the student's repertoire before more appropriate behaviors can be taught. The reduction or elimination of maladaptive behaviors becomes the primary focus of instruction. Functional skill acquisition becomes secondary and is only considered after inappropriate skills have been extinguished. A student may display difficulty staying on task, for instance. Under the eliminative model, the emphasis would be on devising a program that would increase "on-task behavior." The task itself, however, would be of little consequence and would oftentimes not be considered when evaluating the success or lack of success with the elimination program. While very few educators would profess to basing their educational curriculum on an eliminative model, their reasons for not providing more functional learning opportunities for their students may suggest the eliminative approach:

"Mike is not ready to go into the community yet. He's far too distractible."
"Joan wouldn't benefit from being in an integrated school. She doesn't even attend to people sitting right next to her."

"As soon as Tom stops screaming all the time, I'll send him down the hall to gym class with the others."

Basing curriculum content on an eliminative approach has two very basic shortcomings. First, it delays functional skill acquisition. For some individuals who may display severe behavioral challenges, their entire time in public schools may be spent on programs designed to eliminate behaviors. Acquisition of adaptive skills may never occur or may occur at such a slow rate as to be inconsequential upon graduation. Secondly, for many individuals, the eliminative approach may strip individuals of their only functional means of controlling their environment (Wilcox & Bellamy, 1982). Individuals who spend their school years involved in this type of educational programming graduate with very few functional skills and very little means of affecting their world.

A fourth approach to developing curricular content that has emerged in more recent years has its focus on adult life needs. Unlike the "bottom up" approach of the developmentalists, curriculum developed around adult life needs represents a "top down" approach. Nonhandicapped adults rather than children are used as the norm. The goal of the educational process in this approach is to prepare students to live, work, and recreate as independently as possible in an integrated society. To meet this goal, curricular content is developed from focusing on nonhandicapped adults and selecting those skills which are critical to their independent functioning. Curricular content is developed through a process called an ecological inventory (Brown et al., 1979). Environments and activities that are experienced by nonhandicapped adults are identified and analyzed to determine what critical skills are necessary to function within each.

This process of inventorying the environment to determine curricular content is very different from selecting goals based upon developmental assessments, same-age school curriculum or maladaptive behaviors. Unlike the developmental approach where students are taught in "compartments" (e.g., motor, cognitive, language, social), curriculum based on adult life needs encourages integrated learning. Skills are identified in each of five domains: domestic, community, leisure, vocational and interactions with nonhandicapped persons. These critical skills include many of the same ones that have been identified in other approaches such as fine motor, cognitive, language, and social (from a developmental approach), and reading, math, writing (from a same-age, nonhandicapped curriculum approach). The inclusion of these skills in the curriculum is now determined, however, by functional utility rather than by developmental order. The skills are also taught in a context of functional application rather than in isolation. In the developmental approach, language skills may be taught during a circumscribed time of the day, reading skills in another, math in still another. Curriculum developed with a focus on the demands of adult life encourages lessons in each of the domains that integrate skill areas such as language, reading and math. The morning may be divided into Domestic and Community with math, reading, and language skills being taught several times during the course of the morning lessons. Figures 3, 4, 5, and 6 provide suggestions for ways to incorporate such academic areas as reading, writing, math, and communication into the Domestic, Recreation/Leisure, Community, and Vocational domains. Each domain contains numerous naturally occurring events and activities that require an array of math, reading, motor, and communication skills.

Once critical skills are identified in each domain, the next step in the ecological inventory process is to break down each skill into manageable instructional units through the process of task analysis. The assessment conducted under this approach is called a discrepancy analysis. This assessment delineates which of the critical skills that have been identified in each domain are lacking in the student's current repertoire. Once the deficits have been identified, decisions are made relative to the

efficacy of teaching the missing skills. These decisions will be made based upon several variables: age of student, current functioning level, parental input, time remaining to graduation, utility of skill across environments, etc. As deficits are identified for each student, one of three decisions must be made:

1. To teach the missing skills to the students;

2. To circumvent the missing skills by developing adaptations; or

3. To teach the student to partially participate in the activity to the maximum extent possible.

If the decision is made to teach the deficient skills, then systematic instruction is provided to the student using naturally occurring cues and correction procedures and real materials/equipment whenever possible. Instruction is conducted in natural environments to the maximum extent possible. For some students, however, decisions might be made to adapt instructional procedures, materials, equipment, expectations, routines or performance modes to circumvent certain deficits. Rather than continuing to teach a 16 year old to make circles and lines on paper to approximate his name, use of a hand held name stamp and pad may be taught instead. For students who are unable to read words, pictures of food items may comprise their shopping list and a calculator may be used to determine enough/not enough for the purchase. The reader is referred to an excellent article by Brown et al. (1979) for more detail on developing individualized adaptations for students with significant skill deficits.

A third type of decision might be made for students as skill deficits are identified. The concept of partial participation might be applied to students who have significant skill deficits and for whom adaptations seem impractical. Partial participation refers to facilitating students' participation in functional activities to the maximum extent that their abilities will allow, even though verbal and/or physical assistance may always be required. A severely mentally handicapped student who is visually impaired, for example, may never be able to cross streets independently. She/he can be encouraged to stop when approaching a curb, ask when traffic is clear, and then accompany someone across the street. A student who does not have the fine motor skills to select a piece of bread from the wrapper and put it into the slot of a toaster may still participate by pushing the lever down. The concept of partial participation allows individuals with significant deficits the opportunity to be involved in age-appropriate functional tasks, rather than being relegated to nonfunctional, oftentimes age-inappropriate tasks.

Developing curricular content based upon demands of adult life has several advantages over other curricular models, particularly when applied to students at the secondary level:

1. It maximizes the potential of acquired skills being useful to students. Under other curricular approaches, skills may be taught for reasons other than their functional utility.

2. It maintains the dignity of the individual. Rather than providing instruction which focuses on the individual's mental age, this approach provides learning opportunities similar to those of nonhandicapped same-age peers or adults. It thereby minimizes the use of materials and activities that are geared towards much younger individuals.

Figure 3. Ways of Incorporating Academic Skills into the Domestic Domain.

DOMESTIC

	READING/WRITING	MATH	COMMUNICATION
Personal Health/Daily Living Skills	- Locates correct bathroom using labels (e.g., men, women, boys, girls) - Demonstrates ability to use personal identification card - Recognizes poisonous items/-dangers by signs/labels - Uses phone book to locate numbers	- Demonstrates ability to use emergency phone numbers - Dials phone numbers accurately - Weighs self regularly	- Indicates need to change wet/soiled pants - Indicates need to use bathroom - Identifies various clothing items - Identifies need for clothing to be laundered, mended, ironed - Identifies various emergency situations (sickness, injury, etc.) - Identifies appropriate person(s) for assistance - Reports sickness to adults - Demonstrates phone etiquette - Initiates and responds to phone conversations as appropriate - Relays phone messages to appropriate persons
House-Keeping	- Follows housekeeping schedule/ routine - Locates appropriate cleaning materials using labels	- Measures appropriate amounts of cleaning solution - Demonstrates awareness to replenish supplies	- Identifies items/areas to be cleaned - Identifies appropriate cleaning materials needed - Asks for assistance as needed
Meal Preparation	- Classifies various foods into the four basic food groups - Plans balanced meals using the food groups - Follows a recipe in correct sequence	- Demonstrates calorie awareness - Demonstrates ability to use measurement tools - Demonstrates ability to set stove and/or oven temperature - Demonstrates time related skills while cooking - Determines and secures materials for the determined number of placesettings - Serves appropriate quantities of food	- Requests food politely - Socializes appropriately during mealtime

(From S. Freagon et al., (1983). Curricular processes for the school and community integration of severely handicapped students ages 6-21: Project replication guide. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University).

Figure 4. Ways of Incorporating Academic Skills into the Recreation/Leisure Domain.

RECREATION/LEISURE

	READING/WRITING	MATH	COMMUNICATION
Bowling	- Includes name on score sheet - Writes in score/pins down per frame VENDING - Scans vending area for desired machine - Selects desired items	- Identifies number in group - Obtains correct shoe size - Scorekeeping - Pays for game(s) VENDING - Deposits proper coins	- Communicates activity desired to service personnel - Requests necessary materials - Communicates pins down to scorekeeper - Identifies game scores to players - Communicates number of games played to service personnel - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions
Game Arcade	- Follows instructions for using change machine - Scans game room, moves to desired area - Selects game to play - Plays game as directed	- Obtains proper change/tokens - Dispenses money/tokens into machine	- Requests change/tokens from service personnel - Identifies end of game, winner - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions
Library	- Checks books for due dates - Locates correct drawer for subject/author by alphabet in card catalog - Scans drawer, locates correct card - Locates section for desired materials - Locates specific area/shelf for desired materials - Selects desired materials - Uses library card - Reads selected materials	- Pays fine on late books - Locates book "call" number	- Identifies need to use library - Identifies overdue books - Identifies amount of money needed to pay fine - Identifies area to return books - Asks for assistance if books are overdue - Communicates name to renew desired materials - Communicates name to check out new materials - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions
Movie Theatre	- Checks paper for what movie is playing - Selects appropriate movie to attend - Scans display case of snack bar - Scans lobby for correct movie title/cinema number	- Determines number of tickets to be purchase - Purchases tickets - Purchases snacks desired - Secures seating appropriate for number in group	- Phones theatre for what movies are playing - Communicates number of tickets/movie desired to service personnel - Places snack order to service personnel - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions

(From S. Freagon et al., (1983). Curricular processes for the school and community integration of severely handicapped students ages 6-21: Project replication guide. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University).

Figure 5. Ways of Incorporating Academic Skills into the Community Domain.

COMMUNITY

	Reading/ Writing	Math	Communi- cation	Reading/ Writing	Math	Communi- cation
Bus Line	- Obtains schedule/ route guide - Determines correct bus stop for boarding and destination	- Determines bus number appropriate for destination - Determines time bus will depart - Deposits correct change (token) in fare box	- Identifies destination - Identifies time of bus departure - Requests transfer - Verifies destination if uncertain - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interaction	**Sit-Down Restaurant** - Identifies wait to be seated/seat yourself - Scans menu to determine selection	- Determines cost of entrees - Determines enough/not enough money for selections - Identifies check total - Pays appropriate amount	- Communicates number in group to be seated - Communicates order to waitress - Interacts appropriately with peers - Requests separate checks - Asks for service when needed - Responds appropriately to interactions
Bank	- Chooses correct banking form - Completes deposit or withdrawal slip information - Endorses check	- Totals check/ cash - Checks computation on banking form	- Identifies banking services needed - Indicates banking process to service personnel - Asks for assistance when needed - Responds appropriately to interactions	**Fast-Food Restaurant** - Scans menu selection board to determine order	- Determines price of selections - Determines enough/not enough money for purchase - Pays appropriate amount	- Communicates order - Communicates for here or to go - Requests condiments - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions
Grocery	- Scans shopping list to initiate shopping activity - Locates departments - Uses grocery list - Chooses items based on brand, size, weight, and quantity	- Determines cost of items - Determines enough/not enough money for purchases - Pays cashier after total is given	- Identifies items to be purchased - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions	**Department Store** - Scans shopping list - Determines departments needed and locates those areas - Chooses items based on size/ quantity/brand	- (clothing) Locates size of item - Checks price tags - Determines enough/not enough money to buy - Pays for purchase	- (clothing) Locates store clerk for permission to try on item - Asks for assistance when needed - Responds appropriately to interactions

(From S. Freagon et al., (1983). Curricular processes for the school and community integration of severely handicapped students ages 6-21: Project replication guide. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University).

Figure 6. Ways of Incorporating Academic Skills into the Vocational Domain.

VOCATIONAL

	READING/WRITING	MATH	COMMUNICATION
Clerical	- Follows daily schedule, job routine - Sorts (e.g., mail) - Files - Uses telephone book - Attaches labels appropriately - Uses stamper, ink pad appropriately	- Uses time card, records hours worked - Makes proper number or copies - Collates pages in correct order - Takes breaks at correct time and for appropriate length of time	- Identifies supervisor/location to receive job assignment - Places calls as directed - Takes messages - Communicates when a particular job is completed - Asks for more work as needed - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions on the job and during breaks
Food Service	- Follows daily schedule, job routine - Identifies menu items - Follows recipe directions	- Uses time card, reports hours worked - Measures soap for dishwasher - Measures ingredients for menu item(s) - Sets oven at proper temperature - Sets oven timer - Takes breaks at correct time and appropriate length of time ACTING AS A CASHIER - Counts money combinations - Totals bill - Makes change - Operates cash register	- Identifies supervisor/location to receive job assignment - Communicates when a particular job is finished - Asks for more work as needed - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions on the job and during breaks
Janitorial/ Housekeeping	- Follows daily schedule, job routine	- Uses time card, records hours worked - Measures detergent for laundry - Operates dryer, including appropriate quantity of clothes and temperature setting - Replenish, refill service supplies as needed - Takes breaks at correct time and for appropriate length of time	- Identifies supervisor/location to receive job assignment - Communicates when a particular job is finished - Asks for more work as needed - Asks for assistance as needed - Responds appropriately to interactions on the job and during breaks

(From S. Freagon et al., (1983). Curricular processes for the school and community integration of severely handicapped students ages 6-21: Project replication guide. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University).

3. It is not an exclusionary model. Rather than determining that students are "not ready for" certain types of activities and skills, this approach meets the student where they are currently functioning and either teaches additional functional skills, develops adaptations to circumvent deficits, or encourages partial participation in age-appropriate functional tasks.

4. It incorporates traditional academics and developmental tasks into a functional framework. Rather than teaching skills in isolation, this approach incorporates them into functional activities of daily living (e.g., cooking, grocery shopping). Students are not left with the burden of integrating their learning. The curriculum does it for them. And finally,

5. The curriculum is preparatory in nature. Its goal is maximizing students' potential for productivity, independence, and participation as an adult in an integrated society.

The process of developing curriculum according to the demands of adult life has been written about extensively in the literature of the past five years. For more in-depth coverage of both the process and the products of this approach, the reader is referred to any or all of the following: Design of High School Programs for Severely Handicapped Students by Wilcox and Bellamy (1982), Community-Based Curriculum: Instructional Strategies for Students with Severe Handicaps by M. Falvey (1986), Individual Student Community Life Skill Profile System for Severely Handicapped Students by Freagon et al. (1983), and Curricular Strategies for Preparing Severely Handicapped Students to Function in Current and Subsequent School Environments by Baumgart et al. (1981).

Integrated School System

The second component that has been identified as being an essential building block in the high school foundation is an integrated service delivery system. It seems unreasonable and highly unlikely that educators can prepare students to become independent, productive, and participating members of an integrated society if students continue to be educated in isolation.

There appears to be a slow but perceptible move toward integrated school environments in this country for moderately and severely handicapped students, (Certo et al., 1984). Madeline Will (1983), Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) maintained that one of the top priorities established by the U. S. Department of Education is to significantly reduce the number of handicapped children placed by public schools in segregated self-contained day schools and residential facilities. Initiatives take time to become policy and today many students with disabilities continue to receive their education apart from same-age nondisabled peers.

Arguments against integration generally fall into three categories: legal, emotional, and programmatic or administrative. The concept of integration is clearly established in the rules and regulations accompanying P. L. 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act):

> ...That to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities are educated with children who are not handicapped...

> ...That special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved. (Federal Register, 1977, p. 42497)

Legal challenges to integration for moderately and severely handicapped students generally focus on the rather conservative language of the law itself and the regulations that accompany it (e.g., "continuum of alternative placements;" "to the maximum extent appropriate"). Implementation of the law depends heavily on individual determinations and interpretations. It has been suggested that the regulations provide a consumer-based definition of what an appropriate education is or isn't. If parents, advocates, etc. (the consumer) are satisfied with the program, the program is appropriate. If not, due process procedures can be started. Certo et al. (1984) reports, however, that only in two recent court cases - Campbell v. Talladega Board of Education, 1981; and Fialkowski v. Shapp, 1975 - has integrated education, that is, education of moderately and severely handicapped students in the same buildings as nonhandicapped students, specifically been ordered.

Challenges to integration based on social or emotional considerations echo much of the same type of thinking that promotes the continuation of a developmental approach to curriculum development. Moderately and severely handicapped students are often thought to be "not ready for" integrated settings because they continue to be regarded by many as eternal children. There is concern about how they will be treated and many feel they would feel more comfortable with "their own kind." The assumption is made that students with disabilities need to be protected and in an integrated school setting they would be ridiculed, abused, ripped off and assaulted by other students. An interesting study by Ziegler and Hambleton (1976) suggests that teasing and physical aggression may be higher in segregated settings than in integrated ones and aggression that does occur in integrated settings is more likely to be initiated by handicapped peers than nonhandicapped peers.

A wealth of available empirical evidence supports the perspective that all children, regardless of their disability, have the right to receive an education in a public school attended by nonhandicapped similar-age peers. Exemplary program analyses (Taylor, 1982; Certo et al., 1984) as well as research studies (Voeltz, 1980, 1982; Wilcox & Sailor, 1980) suggest that not only does integration have a positive impact on the quality of services provided to students with disabilities, but integration also enhances the levels of acceptance displayed by nondisabled students. The goal of the educational program for moderately and severely handicapped students ought to be to prepare them to work, live, and recreate as independently as possible in an integrated society. Moderately and severely handicapped individuals represent approximately 3% of the population in this country. The remaining 97% of the population are less disabled or nondisabled. The nonhandicapped students who attend school with moderately and severely handicapped peers will become the bank tellers, restaurant owners and employees, grocery store clerks, movie theater managers, teachers, neighbors, and employers of the future. By integrating students from elementary through high school, we can begin to have an affect on the attitudes and expectations of these individuals. In time, many of the attitudinal barriers that prevent moderately and severely handicapped individuals from enjoying a quality life as adults will diminish. Parents, advocates, and professional service providers will no longer have to argue "whether" this population should be allowed to live, work, and recreate in integrated settings. The question will become "how to support" individuals in these settings.

The third type of challenge to integration generally focuses on programmatic or administrative objections and concerns. There are those who believe that including both disabled and nondisabled students in the same facility will affect the quality of services to both groups. The implications here are vague at best. No data are available on the impact of integration on the academic performance of nonhandicapped students, but logic suggests that an integrated facility could actually provide a richer and more varied educational experience for both groups of students. Those who voice their concerns that integrating students with handicaps will dilute the curriculum offered to nonhandicapped students obviously confuse the practice of integration with that of mainstreaming. The distinctions between these two concepts are clear in the following definition:

> Integration is defined (here) as the placement of students with severe handicaps into special education classrooms on chronological, age-appropriate, regular school sites with planned, systematic, and sustained interaction opportunities with their nonhandicapped peers. (Project Reach, 1983, p. 32)

Mainstreaming focuses on moving less severely handicapped students into the general education classroom. Integration efforts are not aimed at this same goal but rather at enhancing opportunities for interactions with nonhandicapped students through non-academic classes (e.g., music, physical education, art, recess, lunch, IMC, school assemblies).

A second programmatic/administrative challenge suggests the need for a segregated facility to provide for the very special needs of this population. Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, school districts must provide buildings that are physically accessible. This does not mean that all school facilities must be made accessible, nor does it justify placing all students with special needs in one building that has been identified as meeting these standards. Snell (1982) reports that a large portion, possibly as high as 75% of severely handicapped students, have the motor skills necessary to negotiate obstacles in their environments generally considered to be architectural barriers. There is no need to create the "perfect environment" for students with handicapping conditions, particularly those with physical limitations. Students need to learn how to confront and manage some of the barriers that they will encounter later on in life where the world is not totally accessible (e.g., maneuvering wheelchairs, toilets difficult to flush, towel dispensers too high).

From a programmatic standpoint, there is nothing that can be taught in a segregated facility that cannot be reasonably taught in an integrated one, particularly if the curriculum is based upon the demands of adult life. Brown et al. (1976) rejects the "logic of homogeneity" that promotes segregated schools. Rather than placing students into programs according to their identified educational needs, the logic of homogeneity places students according to their disability(ies). It assumes that all students labeled moderately or severely handicapped have similar educational needs and, therefore, should be educated in the same facility. We see the same logic applied to youngsters who are physically disabled, those having challenging behaviors, those labeled autistic, and those diagnosed as having hearing or visual impairments.

Attendance in schools also serving nonhandicapped students is a necessary condition, but not a sufficient one to ensure the best possible foundation for effective transitioning to adulthood. Students can be segregated in an integrated facility. There are several criteria that need to be examined beyond the presence of nonhandicapped students in the same facility. The first relates to the age-appropriateness of the placement. Students with moderate and severe disabilities should be placed into

integrated school settings based on their chronological age and should "graduate" from one level (e.g., elementary) to the next (e.g., middle or junior high) at approximately the same time that their nonhandicapped schoolmates do. Placing handicapped students into schools based on availability of space or to reduce transportation costs is unacceptable and defeats many of the goals of integration. Placing all students, regardless of age, in one facility because it is the only one that is accessible is equally unacceptable. Rather, elementary-age students ought to receive their educational program in regular elementary schools, middle school age students in middle or junior high schools, and secondary age students in high schools.

The second criteria relates to the opportunities that exist for interactions with nonhandicapped students within the school day. Functional interactions need to be planned. Segregation of handicapped students into wings, pods, floors, etc. of the regular school buildings with separate access to lunchrooms, libraries, playgrounds, etc. does not represent the spirit of "least restrictive environment." Placing intermediate age students next to the kindergarten classroom rather than in closer proximity to fourth and fifth grade classrooms inhibits the possibility of age-appropriate interactions and perpetuates the notion of these students as eternal children. Opportunities for meaningful interactions between disabled and nondisabled students can also occur during non-educational times such as lunch, recess, and school assemblies. For this reason, it is imperative that schedules reflect heterogeneous groupings during these times and not separate times and/or places for the special education students.

A third criteria relates to the proportion of disabled to nondisabled students in any given school. When the ratio of disabled to nondisabled students exceeds the ratio in the population as a whole, the placement is no longer in the least restrictive environment. Again, the individual needs of the students, not the availability of space should determine placement. Often times integration will begin by a principal offering a classroom in his/her school. To avoid new barriers and rejections, administrators will continue to place students with disabilities into this one school until the natural proportions of disabled to nondisabled that exist in society are violated.

A fourth criteria calls for equal access to educational facilities within the school for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities should have equal access to such facilities as libraries, cafeterias, media centers, industrial and home economics rooms, gymnasiums, music and art rooms as do their nondisabled counterparts. While "access" does not necessarily equate with services being provided by regular education teachers, there is a growing emphasis on team teaching in some of the non-academic areas alluded to above.

A final criteria by which the degree of integration may be measured relates to the normal organization of the school day. Students with disabilities should be arriving and departing from school at approximately the same time as their nondisabled peers. Any arrangement whereby students arrive later or leave substantially earlier for social, financial, administrative, or logistical reasons is untenable. Students should pass through the halls when other students do, take breaks and recesses at the same time as their same-age peers and begin and end their day in the same manner as others in the school.

What many may offer as programmatic objections to integration become more administrative concerns upon closer scrutiny. It is much easier for a principal to manage and assign staff in one building than if they are dispersed throughout a district in elementary, middle, and high schools. It is much easier for therapists to offer services if all the students are in the same facility. It is far easier to arrange

and pay for transportation if every student is coming to the same place. In-services and parent/teacher conferences are much more conveniently arranged if all the staff and parents are connected with only one school, rather than dispersed throughout a district. Administrative convenience, not sound educational practice maintains segregated schools in many parts of this country today.

Falvey (1986) summarizes the reasons discussed in the literature and supported by research to support the continued integration of students with moderate and severe disabilities:

(1) Integration can positively affect attitudes of nonhandicapped individuals towards persons with disabilities now and in the future. By affecting the attitudes of nonhandicapped students, integration can also affect the opportunities offered to individuals with disabilities as they enter the adult arenas. The students that attend school today with handicapped students will be the parents, teachers, legislators, doctors, rehabilitation specialists, etc. of the future;

(2) Integration can provide opportunities for students with and without handicaps to learn about and from one another;

(3) Integration can provide opportunities to facilitate the acquisition of communication, social, leisure, and interaction skills among moderately and severely handicapped students;

(4) Through integration, both handicapped and nonhandicapped students can learn to understand and value individual differences among people; and

(5) Integration can provide opportunities for nonhandicapped and handicapped individuals to develop meaningful friendships with one another. (p. 220)

Readers are referred to an excellent text by Certo et al. (1984) entitled Public School Integration of Severely Handicapped Students: Rational Issues and Progressive Alternatives, for a factual, conceptual, and economic counterpoint to many of the arguments surrounding integration.

Community-Based Instruction

The third component identified as being an essential building block in the high school foundation is community-based instruction. For years, it was believed that if students were moderately or severely handicapped, all essential learning could take place within the confines of the school building and the surrounding grounds. Out of school learning, unless it was taught at home, was confined to field trips. These trips into the community were generally done en masse, through the use of a large yellow school bus, seasonal in nature (e.g., pumpkin and turkey farms, visits to Santa Claus), unstructured in terms of specific educational goals to be achieved and episodic in nature.

The results of the follow-up studies delineated earlier and the subsequent move to developing curricular content based on adult life needs have impacted on where students with moderate and severe handicaps should be taught. When the goal of

education becomes preparing individuals to participate as independently and productively as possible in a heterogeneous society, where instruction takes place becomes very crucial. When assessment of students' educational needs is directed by the demands of nondisabled adult life, the school building very quickly becomes inadequate as the sole environment for instruction to take place. When we realize that the majority of the student's life will be spent in natural community environments outside of the school setting (including the home), the necessity of providing skill training away from the school building becomes apparent. Finally, when we acknowledge that as learners, moderately and severely handicapped individuals have a great deal of difficulty dealing with abstractions, irrelevant details, synthesizing information and generalizing what they have learned, instruction in natural environments seems even more critical.

Community-based instruction is characterized in the following ways:

- training of skills in actual environments where skills will ultimately be required and performed:
- regular, well-planned trips to community environments specifically selected for each student;
- small numbers of students to preserve the concept of natural proportions;
- individualization of objectives and training;
- classroom activities, tasks, and materials that are referenced (e.g., reinforced) in natural community environments; and
- evaluation of progress under natural, as opposed to contrived, situations.

There are many sound reasons to include community-based instruction into high school programming for moderately and severely handicapped students, many of which have already been alluded to. First, it ensures that students practice activities and tasks under the conditions characteristic of the real world rather than under artificial conditions. By practicing skills in real environments such as restaurants, grocery stores, shopping malls, and bowling alleys, students are subjected to the criterion demands of the natural setting rather than the oftentimes arbitrary standards of teachers. Money handling at a classroom table may be far different than paying for purchases at a fast food restaurant with a line of impatient and hungry customers waiting. Cleaning off the school's lunchroom tables following lunch may come under much less scrutiny than the same activity would if it were being done at a local restaurant while customers were waiting to be seated.

Community-based instruction provides students with the opportunity to practice an entire activity (e.g., using public transportation) rather than only those activities that can be conveniently taught in the classroom or through repeated practice. Too often, students are taught bits and pieces of tasks and never have the opportunity to experience the whole "gestalt." Community-based instruction does not eliminate the teaching of academics such as math and reading. Rather, it allows teachers to incorporate academics and related skills in a functional manner. Money, time-telling, communication skills, etc. are taught only if they have a community reference, that is, have utility in one or more of the domains delineated earlier. The same criterion of functionality is used to determine which skills to teach: "If the student cannot do the task/display the skill on his/her own, will someone else have to do it for

him/her?" If the answer is "no", regardless of whether the skill is an academic one or not, the decision should be made to discard that particular objective and move on to one that is more functional.

Community-based instruction also provides opportunities for interactions with nonhandicapped persons in natural proportions. When out-of-school experiences are limited to episodic field trips, nonhandicapped persons come to regard disabled people as a group and not as individuals. Expectations are lowered because individuals with disabilities are rarely seen performing meaningful tasks alone and, therefore, the assumption is made that they are incapable of doing so. Episodic contacts with disabled individuals, as opposed to regular and consistent interactions, do not allow nondisabled persons to observe the progress that occurs when systematic instruction is provided in natural environments. A grocery store clerk who interacts with the same student(s) every week as they receive community-based instruction from a teacher will be much more inclined to regard students as "individuals with handicaps", as opposed to "handicapped people", particularly as she/he sees the progress that is being made to teach functional skills in that particular environment.

Finally, community-based instruction provides opportunities to teach problem solving skills and to promote generalization of acquired skills. While a certain degree of simulation in the classroom (e.g., use of real materials/equipment, rehearsals, use of natural language cues and correction procedures) is appropriate, there is no way to totally simulate many of the situations that will be presented to students in the real world. Students may be taught in the classroom the steps necessary to board a city bus, for example. They cannot adequately learn to deal in the classroom with such problems as having to stand and maintain their balance when all the seats are full, having to negotiate a different departure because the bus has taken a detour, missing their scheduled bus and having to wait for another, or interacting appropriately with an assortment of people while waiting for the bus and en route. Many situations that require problem solving skills cannot be predicted and may not be repeated at regular intervals. The only time and place where instruction can take place is while the event is happening or shortly thereafter.

The problem of skill generalization is much reduced when instruction occurs in the environments where the skills must be performed. For those educators who continue to provide instruction only within the school, they must assume a posture of "teach and hope." There is absolutely no assurance that what is taught in one environment, under the direction of one adult, with one set of materials, with one set of cues will generalize when any of those variables is altered. Community-based instruction reduces the number of variables that can change over time and, therefore, is a far more efficient use of instructional time.

The environments used for community-based instruction should be as individualized as are the goals and objectives designed for each student. One reference should be the chronological age of the student. Students should receive systematic instruction in those environments that are frequented by their same-age nonhandicapped peers. Some environments may change as the student gets older while others may be constant over time, with only the types of skills being taught varying. For example, restaurants and grocery stores are environments that may be frequented by any age student. However, the expectations placed on an elementary age student at a grocery store are very different from those placed on a high school age student. We would not expect a 6 year old to have a shopping list, locate several items, determine if they have enough money, negotiate the checkout lane, pay for groceries and leave the store relatively independently. We could, however, expect this from a high school

age student. The same environment, therefore, could be used for community-based instruction for both students. The expectations and educational objectives assigned to each would be vastly different. The 6 year old may be learning to label commonly used products, may be learning concepts such as colors, sizes (big, little, large, small), and prepositions (next to, under, above). An emphasis may also be placed on promoting acceptable behavior in the environment to insure that parents will feel comfortable taking their children along to the store rather than leaving them at home with a sitter when grocery shopping needs to be done.

Other environments may not be appropriate for every age. A bank, for example, is not ordinarily frequented by young children unless they are going there with their parents. They have very little reason to frequent that environment and, therefore, have very little need to develop banking skills. A middle school or high school age student, however, particularly if they are earning money, needs to learn how to make simple transactions in that environment. A playground, on the other hand, is probably a more suitable environment for elementary age students than older students as it is more likely to be frequented by nonhandicapped elementary age peers than by middle and high school age individuals.

A second consideration in selecting community sites for training is to realize that students need out-of-school instruction in each of the four domains: community, domestic, vocational, and recreation/leisure. Again, the time spent in each domain and the objectives developed for each student need to be individualized to maximize their eventual independence, participation, and productivity. Out-of-school domestic training may take place at the apartment or home of a teacher, instructional aide, other school staff, or at the student's home. Some school districts have realized the importance of training domestic skills in natural environments and rent a modest apartment or home for this purpose during the school year. In DeKalb, Illinois, for instance, a three bedroom home is rented by the school district for two purposes. During the day, it serves as a domestic training site for elementary through high school age students. During the evening hours, it is used as an overnight training site for older students to teach skills which naturally occur during non-school hours (e.g., showering and other hygiene skills, laundry, meal planning and preparation) and to introduce students to small group living away from their parents. For an in depth description of this program, the reader is referred to Freagon et al. (1983).

With regard to the recreation/leisure domain, it is important to utilize community environments that are available in the students' home community, that have a high probability of being frequented by the parents and/or their families, and that have nonhandicapped people utilizing them during the time that students are accessing them during the school day. It does very little to promote community integration if the local rollerskating rink opens up their doors during the day only for the special education class to utilize its facilities. If this is a particularly high priority activity for a particular student, perhaps the parents ought to assume responsibility for teaching the necessary skills during the weekend and permit the teacher to identify other activities that allow for more integration during the day (e.g., library, YMCA, game arcades, etc.).

A second consideration in the recreation/leisure domain is to select a balance of activities to represent both single person involvement and group involvement. If we only instruct students in accessing and utilizing environments that require group activities, we are not accounting for times in the future when they may be alone to entertain themselves. Also, we needn't think of community recreation/leisure activities as only occurring in a specialized facility. Recreation/leisure skills can be

taught at the domestic training site or in the breakroom of a vocational site as well. This may take the form of learning card and board games, reading magazines, listening to music, working on hobbies or projects, or learning to play a musical instrument. Again, the key concern here is to maintain age-appropriate activities in natural environments.

Community-based instruction in the vocational domain should not become a concern for teachers until the students reach middle school age. Prior to this, students should be assigned classroom jobs to perform and emphasis should be placed on job related skills such as punctuality, following directions, responding appropriately to criticism, staying on task, accessing materials and cleaning up, rate and stamina. Community-based vocational instruction for elementary-age students might very well be confined to "awareness" lessons such as visiting various businesses and discussing all the different jobs that are involved, or visiting parents' workplaces.

At the middle and high school level, however, attempts should be made to secure community-based training sites for students to utilize on a regular basis. Employers should be sought that are willing to have their facility utilized by teachers as an extension of the classroom teaching general and specific work skills. Because the training that will be provided is seen as an extension of the school program under federal wage and hour regulations, employers need not be asked to pay students for the work they do and may only be involved for a semester at a time if they so choose. What should be stressed with employers is the importance of providing training in natural environments to students with moderate and severe disabilities and how this type of training can enhance their independence and productivity as adults. As students approach graduation, community vocational sites will want to be sought out that have the potential for paid employment once the student is sufficiently trained and has graduated. Oftentimes, employers that agree to become a training site initially will see the potential of the students working in his/her business and will agree to hire an individual upon graduation. Community-based vocational training not only teaches students valuable work and work-related skills, but also serves the purpose of exposing future employers and co-workers to the potential and reliability of individuals with disabilities.

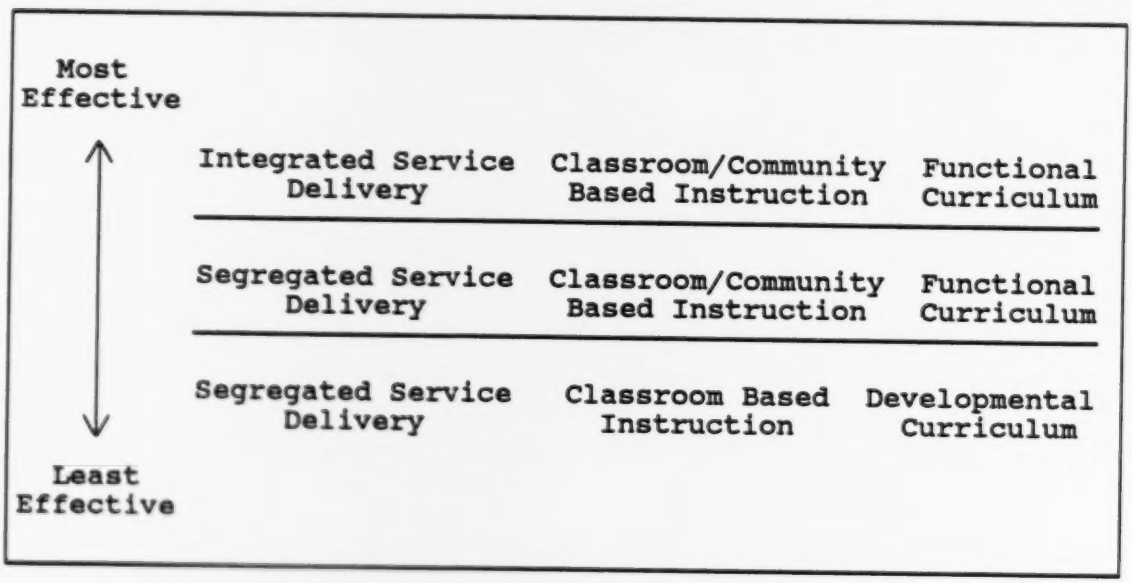
The benefits of community-based instruction for moderately and severely handicapped students at all age levels is very apparent if consideration is given to how these individuals tend to learn. Students characterized as moderately or severely handicapped learn most efficiently and easily when provided with concrete rather than abstract concepts, when irrelevant information, materials, and cues are kept to a minimum, when generalization is programmed into their instruction, when synthesis of information and skills is not left up to them, and when they are allowed to "do" and not merely observe.

While it would be unrealistic to promote a program based totally on community-based instruction, it is not unrealistic to suggest that everything that is taught should have some community referent, whether it be in the domestic, recreation/leisure, vocational, or general community domain. Educators should not continue to teach students to sort plastic blocks from bears because there is no need for this skill as an adult. Rather, students should be taught to sort clothes for laundry, coins for use in vending machines, or large from small food containers. Rather than improving a student's pincer grasp by having him/her secure clothes pins to the edge of a cup, have him/her pick up coins and put them into slots of vending machines, remove cassette tapes from their containers, grasp zipper tabs on clothing, wallets, and bags, or seal zip-lock storage bags. Rather than teaching students to discriminate and label

numbers from flashcards, teach these same skills using clocks, calculators, telephones, elevators, telephone books, and grocery store advertisements. A very useful text by Falvey (1986) entitled Community-Based Curriculum: Instructional Strategies for Students with Severe Handicaps is recommended for readers who are interested in more detailed information on developing and implementing community-based programs.

History, brief as it has been for students with moderate and severe disabilities in the public schools, has demonstrated that without careful planning and preparation for post-school placement, the goals of participation, independence, and productivity will never be achieved. Building the foundation that will provide for a meaningful transition from school to adulthood requires that three components be in place: (1) a functional curriculum, (2) an integrated service delivery model, and (3) community-based instruction. As illustrated by Wehman (1984) in Figure 7, any system which provides its moderately and severely handicapped students with less is shortchanging not only the students themselves, but society as well.

Figure 7. Critical Components of an Educational Program.



(From P. Wehman, & J. Hill (Eds.), Competitive employment for persons with mental retardation. Richmond, VA: Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, p. 192)

Chapter 3

Planning the Transition Process

> The transition from school to working life is an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment. Transition is a period that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional post secondary education or adult services, and the initial years in employment... The transition from school to work and adult life requires sound preparation in the secondary school, adequate support at the point of school leaving, and secure opportunities and services, if needed, in adult situations. (Will, 1984, p. 2)

This federal definition of transition delineates the three critical transition elements: the sending agency, the actual hand-off process, and the receiving environments (Maddox & Edgar, 1985). The sending agency for the vast majority of moderately and severely handicapped individuals in need of transition services is the public school. The hand-off involves the process and procedures that are developed and utilized to move an individual from one environment (the school) to another (adult services). The receiving environments are those adult agencies that will assume primary service responsibility for the individual once they are no longer the legal responsibility of the school system.

Chapter 2 delineated for the reader the elements that need to be in place within the sending agency to enhance successful transition efforts for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities. The purpose of this chapter will be to describe the "hand-off" process. When does the transition process begin? Who is involved and why? What are the essential steps in the process? Chapter 4 will examine the outcomes of the transition process and, in so doing, discuss what types of services the receiving agencies ought to be developing for persons with moderate and severe disabilities.

When to Start and Why?

Much of the legislation and many of the initiatives coming from both state and federal levels speak to the concern of transitioning individuals from high school to adulthood. As explained in Chapter 2, much of the recent emphasis placed on transitioning has come as the result of: (1) discouraging employment statistics among the disabled, (2) the result of follow-up studies conducted with special education graduates, and (3) parents, educators, and others advocating for more and better services for this population. However, transition efforts need not wait until the high school years to begin. Many of the problems encountered during all three phases of transitioning (input, process, and output) could be lessened if service providers and parents set their sights on the future much earlier. While it is not within the scope of this book to discuss the specifics of transitioning students between environments before they reach high school, there are certain critical components that should be recognized as ongoing in terms of transition efforts.

The first component involves the solid foundation that needs to be built to facilitate successful community adjustment. The building should be initiated very early. The same three critical components of an educational program that were identified in Chapter 2 should be developed within any program serving individuals

with moderate or severe disabilities, regardless of their ages. Students should be provided with a curriculum that is functional, age-appropriate and preparatory in nature. Curriculum should be developed which reflects the demands of the next environment, whether that be elementary, middle or high school, or adulthood. Students should receive instruction in an environment that contains nonhandicapped students and the proportion of disabled to nondisabled students should not exceed that which occurs naturally in society. Finally, the instructional program should not be "school bound." Students should receive instruction and practice in non-school environments on a regular basis throughout their school experiences.

A second component of transition efforts that can begin very early involves advocating for educational services to be provided as close to home as possible. Students need to learn how to access and utilize the wide variety of resources available in their home community. This includes such environments as restaurants, grocery stores, recreational facilities, laundromats, libraries, shopping centers, and banks, to name just a few. Students need to develop friendships with nondisabled same-age peers that live nearby and have opportunities to interact with them both in and outside of school.

The community as a whole needs to become familiar with those individuals who are disabled within their town or city. They need to observe them through the years learning new skills, accessing and utilizing new environments, and approaching adulthood. These individuals should not be strangers when the time comes for seeking community vocational training sites, paid employment after graduation, or when the need to develop small supported living arrangements is brought forth. Advocating to maintain students with moderate and severe disabilities in their home community schools does much to bridge the gap between school and adulthood. Students who receive their education somewhere other than their home community will very likely return as strangers once they leave the security and structure of the public school setting. Facilitating successful community integration and adjustment for individuals who received their education in another community will undoubtedly be much more precarious than if the home communities had "grown up" with the individuals.

A third manner in which transition efforts may be facilitated during the earlier years is for special education teachers to assist parents in setting realistic goals for their sons/daughters as adults. Too often, parents and special educators alike, establish long-term goals for individuals depending upon what is currently available or easily accessible in the adult service arena. This does not always result in maximizing the student's independence, productivity, and/or participation. Nor does it help to broaden the array of services that are made available for this population once they leave the school system. This type of goal setting only helps to maintain the status quo, which in many parts of the country is sadly inadequate. Too often, parents do not begin thinking of what they want for their children as adults until the student is approaching graduation. This may be far too late to establish the type of services they desire (e.g., small group homes, community-based supported employment). Special education teachers and others involved with parents during the early school years (e.g., psychologists, social workers, therapists) need to help parents look to the future and beyond the status quo by: (1) encouraging parents to begin thinking of residential and vocational alternatives for their sons/daughters as adults; (2) providing parents with current information regarding "state-of-the-art" programming and services in other parts of the state or country; (3) facilitating parents' efforts to learn about the different agencies that may assume responsibility for their son/daughter upon graduation (e.g., Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, social service agencies, mental health departments, social security office, residential providers; and (4) encouraging and

assisting parents in advocating for those services that need to be developed to fill in the gap between what is and what ought to be. It may be very difficult for parents of a 10 year old to decide what type of residential or vocational environment they would like to see their daughter in at age 21. What must be impressed upon parents, however, is that unless they decide, others will and the decisions will be based upon available options, not necessarily upon the individual needs of the student or the desires of the parents.

Transition efforts, then, can begin very early if parents and educators continue to have at least one eye directed toward the future. There is much that can be accomplished in terms of expectations, establishing a firm educational foundation, and notifying adult service providers of gaps and weaknesses in their systems. If transitioning is regarded as an ongoing process, the "hand-off" process upon graduation from high school will be far more successful for all those involved.

For those students with moderate and severe disabilities, formal transition plans should be initiated as soon as they reach secondary age (14-15 years old). For those students receiving their education in an age-appropriate setting, this should correspond to their entering the high school environment. Brown et al. (1980) and others have suggested that this is the latest that individualized transition plans should be initiated if plans that are both longitudinal and comprehensive in nature are to be designed. Once the transition plan for an individual is developed to represent all four curricular domains (domestic, community, vocational, and recreation/leisure), it should be reviewed, evaluated, and/or modified on a yearly basis. Before individualized transition plans can be developed, however, a good deal of groundwork needs to be laid, particularly in those communities where transitioning efforts have been virtually non-existent in the past for this particular population. In order for the groundwork to be laid, the "players" in the transition process need to be identified and a "game plan" needs to be devised.

Who are the "Players" in the Transition Process?

In order for a community to develop all three components of the transition effort (input, process, and output), there must be a commitment among agencies to the transition process itself. Unless formal planning is valued by decision makers from both the sending and receiving agencies, effective transitioning will not occur, or it will occur in a very haphazard, inefficient, and ineffective manner (Maddox & Edgar, 1985).

The first step in designing the transition process is to identify all the agencies and/or individuals that could in some way affect the outcome of the process itself. In most communities, these would include the following:

- special education administrator;
- special education teacher;
- vocational education teacher;
- vocational rehabilitation administrators and/or counselors and;
- local mental health/mental disability agency(ies);
- residential provider agency(ies);
- local provider(s) of recreation/leisure programs;
- parents, caretakers, and advocates, and;
- employers

Roles of the Players

The special education administrator has responsibility for the overall direction of the program and for evaluating its effectiveness with students. She/he can allocate funding for new programs and can hire consultants to assist in program development and modifications.

The special education teacher has a current knowledge base regarding students' strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, style/mode of learning, acquisition rate, and levels of supervision needed in given environments. Teachers also are familiar with parents' expectations for their sons and daughters. The special education teacher can have a direct influence on the type of programming offered to students as they plan schedules and implement instructional objectives.

The vocational teacher has provided community-based instruction to students and has first hand knowledge of their strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, etc. In addition, she/he has developed linkages with community employers, and may be knowledgeable about issues regarding Social Security benefits, tax incentives for employers, and subminimum wage concerns.

Representatives from vocational rehabilitation are able to provide input relative to the types of skills critical for successful community employment. They may also have valuable information regarding placement strategies, eligibility and feasibility criteria, and available funding resources. They too have established valuable linkages with private employers.

Individuals from the local mental health/developmental disabilities agency can offer input relative to the nature of the long term support that is available to persons with moderate and severe disabilities. They can allocate direct service and support dollars to programs that seem to hold the promise of increasing the "return on their dollar."

Residential providers can provide input relative to the types of skills that are critical to successful community living in less restrictive environments. They also can re-direct funds to develop a broader array of service options.

Representatives from local recreation programs can provide input relative to existing eligibility or participation criteria and can re-organize existing services to facilitate greater integration. They can also provide input regarding what skills are critical for participation in their programs/facilities.

Employers can provide input relative to the types of skills sought in employees. They can also provide substance to some of the barriers that exist in the private and corporate sector to hiring individuals with moderate and severe handicaps. Finally, employers can provide linkages with businesses in the community and can become an advocate for integrating persons with handicaps into the workforce.

The Core Transition Team

Representatives from each of the above groups should be brought together by the local educational agency (LEA) for purposes of establishing a Core Transition Team (McCarthy et al., 1985). Ideally, the Core Transition Team should consist of as many individuals as possible who are in a position to make rather broad based and far

reaching decisions for their agency. The mission of this Core Team should be to develop the transition procedures and policies that will affect moderately and severely handicapped individuals as they graduate from high school and enter the adult arena. Prior to setting things in motion to accomplish this mission, however, participants need to become aware of the roles and responsibilities currently held by all the team members. Time should be spent allowing team members to become familiar with the other agencies and individuals represented, particularly across the following dimensions:

(1) mission of agency;

(2) population currently serving;

(3) eligibility/feasibility requirement for inclusion;

(4) funding patterns, levels, and sources;

(5) decision-making hierarchy within agency;

(6) current roles and responsibilities in transition process;

(7) existing degree of collaboration/coordination of efforts with other agencies represented, and;

(8) level of commitment to establishing an effective transition process within the community for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities.

The second task of the Core Transition Team should be identifying existing community and school resources/services that are available for persons with moderate and severe disabilities. This can be done by the Core Team as a whole or they may wish to divide into task forces, with one group examining each of the domains (e.g., domestic/residential, community, vocational, and recreation/leisure). Regardless of how the group(s) are organized, their efforts should focus on delineating what is currently available or what is currently being provided to individuals with moderate or severe disabilities in their community. This should include a very thorough examination of <u>what</u> is being provided and <u>where</u> it is being provided. If possible, team members should arrange to visit both school and adult programs that are providing services to this population so they have a first-hand knowledge of what is being offered. Team members may also wish to visit other communities that may be more advanced than their own in terms of the quality and variety of services being offered.

A third task of the Core Transition Team should be to conduct a follow-up study of recent graduates from the special education program, if this has not already been done. For some communities, this may provide the first concrete evidence that money, time, and energy is not being well spent. Readers can locate very thorough and useful descriptions of the procedures used to conduct such a follow-up study in any of the following sources: Wehman et al. (1985), Hasazi et al. (1985), Wheeler et al. (1983), or VanDeventer et al. (1981). The follow-up questionnaire utilized in the study by Wheeler et al. (1983) is contained in Appendix A.

The follow-up study conducted by the Core Transition Team should allow for parental and other caretaker's input regarding the types and level of adult services they would like to see in place for their son or daughter. The results of the follow-up study, in conjunction with the information gleaned from the community and school

inventory, should suggest to the team some key areas where supply is not meeting demand, or where input may not be positively affecting output. If, for instance, individuals are graduating without the ability to functionally apply skills they learned in school, an identified deficit addressed by the Core Team might be directing the development and implementation of a community-based instructional program where none now exists. If the results of the follow-up study reflects only sheltered employment placements for graduates, extremely low wages, and imperceptible upward mobility, then the Core Team ought to place part of their emphasis on developing options that allow for integration, higher wages, and opportunities for vocational advancement.

The Core Transition Team's next task will be to develop procedures to effectively reduce some of the identified discrepancies, shortcomings, and inadequacies in the service continuum. In many cases, the changes that are called for will be longitudinal in nature and may involve the cooperative efforts of more than one agency or group of individuals. Increasing vocational options for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities, for instance, may involve the school program, the local division of vocational rehabilitation and social service agencies. The types of changes and cooperative agreements that are made within and between agencies will depend upon many variables. There exist many examples in the literature of agencies and/or entire systems that have altered either the way they provide services or the population to whom they offer services. The reader is referred to any of the following for examples of how change in existing operating procedures or systems themselves may be initiated and implemented:

(1) Intriligator, Barbara A. (1985). Community-wide transition planning. In Transition Summary, December, 1985; a publication of the National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth.

This article reports on how one large suburban county in Maryland approached the problem of creating effective transition to work services for county residents with disabilities by using a planning process that involved representatives from all relevant segments of the community including parents, school officials, government offices, adult service providers and local business leaders.

(2) Houselog, M. (1985). One school's system's approach to providing community-based vocational training.

Revell, G. (1985). An agency perspective on employment for the citizen who is mentally retarded.

Morell, J., O'Bryan, A., & Pugh, G. Changing a vocational service system: One city's approach to change.

All three articles are in S. Moon, P. Goodall & P. Wehman (Eds.), Critical issues related to supported competitive employment: Proceedings from the first RRTC symposium on employment for citizens who are mentally retarded. Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia.

These articles all describe how existing agencies underwent changes to meet identified needs in the transitioning process for individuals who were moderately or severely handicapped. They provide the reader with not only a

methodology for change, but also suggest some ways to measuring success and effectiveness once the changes have taken place.

(3) Lakin, K., & Bruininks, R. (1985). Strategies for achieving community integration of developmentally disabled citizens. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

This book attempts to fill the gap for state agencies and provider organizations between what research and theory suggest contemporary services should be and the character of these services in their everyday implementation. The authors identify and describe demonstrably effective means of providing state-of-the-art services to persons with disabilities in community settings.

(4) York, R., Schofield, W., Donder, D., Ryndak, D. (1981). Organizing and implementing services for students with severe and multiple handicaps. Illinois State Board of Education.

This text was prepared following the 1981 statewide institute for educators of the severely and profoundly handicapped in Illinois. The proceedings cover many significant topics in the organization and implementation of educational services for students with severe and multiple handicaps. It includes chapters on planning and organizing services, curriculum and instruction, and medical and developmental considerations.

The nature and extent of the changes suggested by the needs assessment (follow-up study, community inventory, plus consumer input) may appear to be overwhelming to the Core Transition Team. If this is the case, McCarthy et al. (1985) suggests that the Core Team target a specific age and/or population with whom they can begin designing and field testing the systems' change process. Selecting a small number of students for a pilot study serves two purposes. First, it allows the transition team the opportunity to field test the processes that are developed in a systematic, manageable fashion. There will be fewer individuals involved and therefore fewer variables to sort through if difficulties develop. The second purpose served by the pilot study approach is that neither the school nor the adult service system is likely to feel overwhelmed with the changes that may be instituted.

While it may seem, at first thought, reasonable to target the oldest students first for the newly developed transition process, a closer look will lead to the realization that perhaps it makes more sense to target younger high school students first. If the transition process is designed to be longitudinal in nature, then it should piloted with students who have several years remaining before they graduate. By targeting students that are in the 15-17 year old range, the adult service system will have the chance to anticipate the services that are going to be required in the next few years. This will allow them time to "gear up" in an organized, as opposed to reactionary manner. It may take several years to develop the procedures, funding mechanisms, cooperative agreements, etc. necessary to provide the types of services that the newly developed transition process calls for.

Individualizing the Transition Process

Once a group of students is identified for the transition pilot study, the Core Transition Team's next task is to determine the parameters of the transition process

for those individual students. What should the process look like? What individuals should be involved in the process? Who should be responsible for initiating it? What should be the "products" of the transition process? How should the effectiveness of the process be measured?

The answers to many of these questions will naturally shift the responsibility of individualizing the transition process from the Core Team to a school-based team. The school system is the agency that is most familiar with the student, has the most background information and has current responsibility for providing services. As the "sender agency" they have the responsibility for initiating the transition process. In most schools, the special education classroom teacher assumes responsibility for initiating the transition process.

Some school districts have elected to employ a transition teacher who assumes the responsibility of not only coordinating transition efforts but also of teaching students in identified postschool environments. Taylor (1982) describes the transition teacher's responsibilities in the Madison (Wisconsin) Metropolitan School District as:

(a) Working with teachers, parents/guardians, related service personnel, and postschool agencies to develop transition plans prior to an individual student's graduation from high school;

(b) Assisting in the coordination of vocational transition plans with those of domestic, general community, and recreation/leisure;

(c) Working with a variety of school and community personnel to develop and provide instruction in postschool environments;

(d) Assisting in the coordination of vocational programs for severely handicapped students on a city wide basis; e.g., across schools and geographic areas;

(e) Working with postschool agencies during the transition planning and implementation process to aid them in making modifications in their service delivery systems such that they will accommodate the varying and ever changing needs of students; and

(f) Transferring responsibility for each graduating student to the appropriate agency.

Still another option for school districts is to assign an individual such as the social worker, psychologist, or special education department chairperson to the task of organizing transition efforts for target students in any given year.

The Individualized Transition Plan (ITP)

Regardless of whose primary responsibility it becomes, an Individualized Transition Team needs to be organized for each student in the target group. This team should be composed of the special education teacher, parents, student, any related service and school personnel identified as being currently involved in the student's school program (e.g. speech therapist, mobility specialist, social worker), and representatives from the adult service arena. Which adult service providers to include on the individualized transition team will depend upon the types of postschool environments

identified by the parents for their son or daughter. Nisbet et al. (1982), suggests that a Parent/Guardian Transition Questionnaire be filled out by parents prior to the first transition meeting. Such a questionnaire can delineate the family's current and future concerns as well as their preferences for postschool environments for their son/daughter. The questionnaire developed by Nisbet and her colleagues can be found in Appendix B.

Ideally, each student should have an Individualized Transition Team assigned to him/her by the time they reach 15-16 years old. The make-up of that team may resemble the same group of individuals that has been involved in designing the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), particularly if the school adheres to a transdisciplinary or multidisciplinary model of program development. The addition of representatives from the adult service arena might be the only distinguishing characteristic between the IEP team and the Individualized Transition Team. The function of the transition team is to develop and monitor the implementation of an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) for the student. Brown (1980) has suggested that an individualized transition plan:

- Should be longitudinal in nature;
- Must be designed and implemented to include a comprehensive program of domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure, and general community training;
- Must contain transition objectives, in which training activities, materials, and evaluation strategies are functionally related to unique subsequent life spaces;
- Requires the actual participation of both school and adult service personnel;
- Requires direct instruction in a wide variety of actual subsequent environments; and
- Should include the focused expertise of competent related service personnel.

The ITP can be a separate document or can be incorporated into the student's existing Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The ITP, although not entirely distinct from the IEP, does differ in two very important ways. First, it requires the active participation and input from not only school personnel, related-staff (e.g., occupational, physical, and speech therapists) and parents, but from adult service providers as well. The second manner in which the ITP differs from the IEP is that the ITP should contain objectives that reflect the actual requirements of the specific postschool environments that the student is expected to transition into (Nisbet et al., 1982). In order for the ITP to reflect such objectives, parents (in concert with teachers and support personnel) must delineate the type of postschool environments they have in mind for their son/daughter. Parents should be encouraged to target the least restrictive postschool environments and services possible for their sons/daughters. In many school districts, the ITP may reflect services that are not currently available. Parents may want their daughter to live in a supported apartment upon graduation with two roommates, one of whom is similarly disabled and one who is nondisabled. However, the community the family lives in has only developed eight bed or larger group homes to date. One of the purposes of the transition process, it should be remembered, is to stimulate growth and diversification in the adult service arena. If ITPs only reflect the status quo of adult services, little will be accomplished to expand and extend the options available to students with moderate and severe disabilities upon graduation. Rather, parents, educators and adult service

providers should design ITPs that maximize the individual's potential to lead as independent and productive a life as possible.

The goals and objectives delineated on the ITP should reflect the actual requirements of the identified postschool environments. The ecological inventory process described in Chapter 2 should be utilized to determine the activities and skills that are required in the actual community, domestic, recreation/leisure and vocational environments identified.

The transition team must next prioritize the objectives arrived at, develop implementation strategies and arrange for the coordination of efforts between the school and the adult service providers. The reader is referred to Brown et al. (1979) for an articulation of specific strategies for prioritizing and developing instructional objectives.

Once the transition objectives have been delineated and prioritized, implementation strategies and timelines should be established and recorded on the ITP. The person(s) responsible for implementing the specific objective should also be named at this time. Once the ITP contains a balance of transition objectives across the four life spaces, strategies and timelines for implementation, and a person or agency assigned to each objective, actual implementation can begin. Appendix C contains an example from Nisbet et al. (1982) of a partial transition plan for a student who has one year remaining in school.

At this point in time, it is imperative that the results of the individualized transition meetings be communicated to the Core Transition Team. While the Core Transition Team identified gaps and weaknesses in the service delivery systems during their initial needs assessment, the ITPs that have been developed will provide much more specific information. The Core Transition Team will learn, for example, exactly what type of residential and vocational options need to be developed, and by when? They will learn what types of staffing patterns will be necessary in the schools to implement the goals (e.g., employing transition teacher or community-vocational trainer). They may discover for the first time that there is a need in their community for some alternative type of public transportation for students with physical limitations entering the adult arena. Once implementation of the transition plan is under way, the Core Transition Team must begin to address the deficits in available options that may have been brought to light as a result of the planning process. This may be done through a series of task forces or work groups. If the first transition plans were developed for students in the 15-17 year range, the Core Team has several years during which to target new programs for development, assign responsibility for changing existing programs, realign budgets, and redesign priorities.

Student's ITPs should be reviewed annually in much the same way as are the IEPs. These annual reviews should be conducted by the Individualized Transition Teams for purposes of evaluating what progress has been made, to add objectives, modify timelines or re-prioritize objectives. These ITP reviews can coincide with the annual IEP meetings, as long as all members of the Individualized Transition Team are in attendance.

As the student gets closer and closer to the point of graduation, the ITP may be modified to reflect adult service providers assuming greater responsibility for actually implementing some of the objectives. For example, during the last year of high school, the local division of vocational rehabilitation may share with the school supervision of a student at a community job site. In this way, both the student and the

employer will be familiar with the adult agency that will assume responsibility for the vocational placement, supervision, and follow along. In a similar fashion, domestic training may be occurring at a teacher's house during the earlier high school years. As students approach graduation, perhaps the training site could be switched to a local group home where the residents are absent during the day. The group home provider may share responsibility for training individual students in domestic skills by providing staff from the group home to assist the teacher during the day.

Evaluating the Transition Process

The final responsibility of the Core Transition Team is to conduct another follow-up study, this time for purposes of evaluating the effectiveness of the newly designed transition process. These follow-up studies should be conducted at regular intervals (e.g., every 2-3 years) as new groups of students are targeted for inclusion into the transition process. Nisbet et al. (1982) suggests the following strategies for collecting relevant follow-up data:

(a) Conduct observations and interviews with relevant persons in the domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure and general community life space of each graduate on a yearly basis subsequent to graduation from high school;

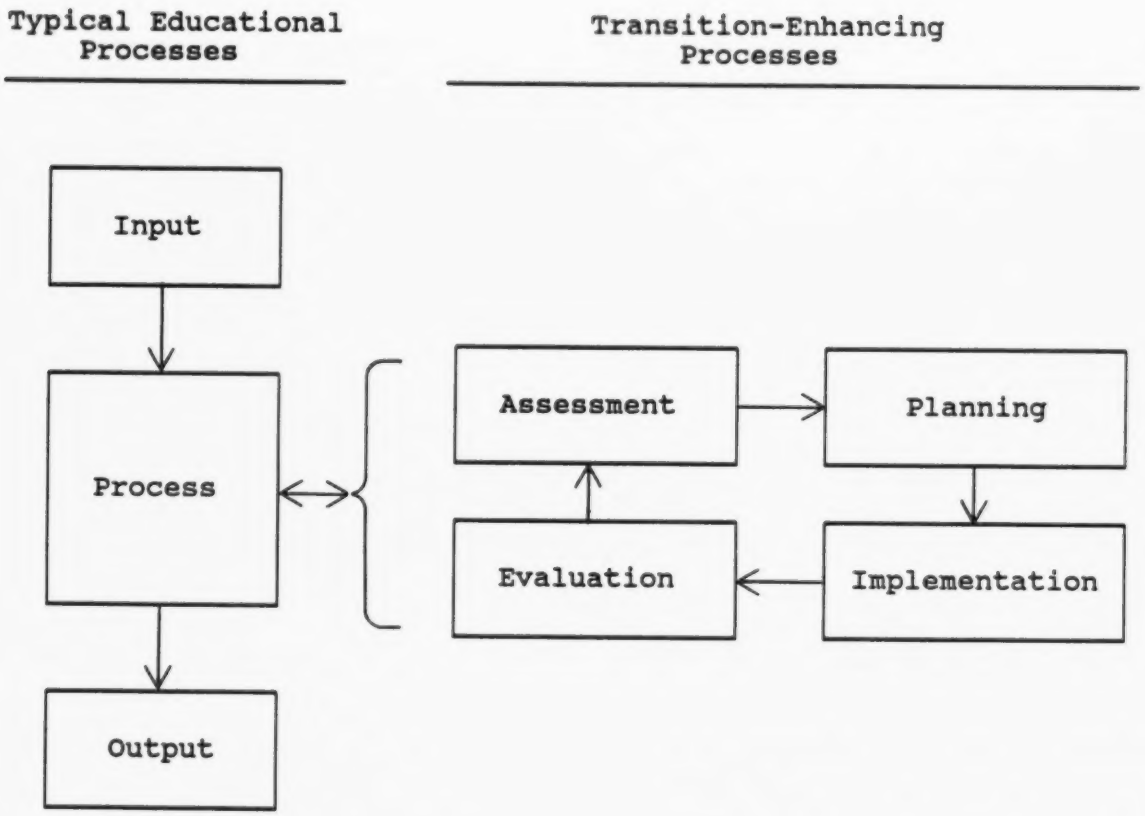
(b) Conduct an analysis of and document the skills necessary to function successfully in the critical environments which are presently or should be utilized by the individual;

(c) Make hypotheses as to the reasons for the success or failure of the graduate; and

(d) Generate reasonable strategies that could be used by public school and adult service personnel and parents/guardians, to improve ITPs.

Once this type of information is gathered, it should be fed back into the service delivery system through joint meetings with adult service providers, school personnel, and parents, and through in-service and pre-service training content. The Core Transition Team should continue to operate as a "change agent" for as long as is necessary to assure the smooth and effective transition of each student with moderate or severe disabilities from school to the adult arena. The accountability of both the public school system and adult service agencies will be measurably enhanced through such sustained efforts to evaluate and disseminate the successes and failures of the transition process. The ongoing mission of the Core Transition Team should be to review the evaluation information (e.g., data from follow-up studies) to increase the level of correspondence between student's needs and the resources and services provided by the schools, the community at large, and adult service agencies. Figure 8 summarizes for the reader the critical steps in the "process" component of transition efforts and also suggests the ongoing responsibilities of the Core Transition Team as additional groups of students are targeted for inclusion.

Figure 8. Critical Steps in the Transition Process.



(From Brown, J. (1984). A model for enhancing the transition of mildly handicapped youth into post-secondary vocational education. In J. Chadsey-Rusch (Ed.), Enhancing transition from school to the workplace for handicapped youth. Champaign, IL.

Chapter 4

Outcomes of the Transition Process

The data gathered and tabulated from the follow-up studies suggested in Chapter 3 will undoubtedly provide some very interesting information. However, unless decision-makers (e.g., members of the Core Transition Team) are knowledgeable about the wide array of adult services that can be made available to persons with moderate and severe disabilities, the information will remain interesting, but not very useful. Will (1984), has described transition as an outcome-oriented process. As such, the outcome(s) of transitioning should provide a means of measuring the effectiveness of the process described in Chapter 3. How is this to be accomplished? Before we are able to measure anything, there must be a standard by which we make comparisons...a unit of measure. This unit of measure becomes particularly critical if we are suggesting that changes or improvements should be made in existing services or structures. If a carpenter wants a piece of board cut shorter, it is important for his co-worker to know how much shorter. Both carpenters will certainly have an idea of what the piece of board should look like once it is cut to the specifications requested because they have a common unit of measure. If the board does not fit, they can remeasure to determine how and why the error occurred. If schools and adult service agencies are expected to improve upon the types of options that are available to individuals graduating from special education programs, they need to have an idea of what the "picture" should look like...of what the final product should resemble. They need to have common "units" of measurement if the outcomes of transition efforts are to be evaluated in a proactive manner. This certainly is not as easy as fitting a board might be for two carpenters because the units of measure are not as universally agreed upon for educators and adult service providers.

Several tasks were assigned to the Core Transition Team in Chapter 3. Among these tasks was conducting a community inventory of existing resources for persons with moderate and severe disabilities. It was suggested that the community inventory be conducted in such a way that information is collected across the same four "life spaces" that were discussed in Chapter 2: domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure, and community-at-large. Once the available services were delineated, the next task assigned to the Team was to conduct a needs assessment by performing a discrepancy analysis. That is, based upon what could be available and what is available, what additional services need to be developed to provide for an array of service options? Where are the discrepancies between what is available and what ought to be available in the life spaces of individuals leaving the school system and entering the adult arena? How can these discrepancies be reduced and who should take on the responsibility for accomplishing this?

There will be two types of outcomes in the transition process and they are very much intertwined. The first has to do with the development of cooperative efforts and agreements between the school system and adult service agencies, and between adult service agencies themselves. Cooperation and not continued competition among the "players" needs to be a desired outcome of any transition effort. The second type of outcome derived from the transition process will be experienced by the students themselves and will consist of the environments and activities that they participate in as adults once they leave the school system. Each of these outcomes will be discussed in more depth in the following pages.

Cooperation and Not Competition

The possibility of competition and territoriality exists at two levels during the transition process. The first is within the Core Transition Team, the second is within the Individualized Transition Team. In both teams, individuals will be coming together who may have very different philosophies, interaction patterns, communication styles, educational backgrounds, expectations, knowledge and expertise. The key to developing cooperation rather than competition within both groups is to focus all this diversity towards a common goal. In the case of the Core Transition Team, that goal should be to improve and expand upon the options that are available for those individuals graduating from special education programs within their district. For the Individualized Transition Teams, this goal should be to develop and implement a transition plan that maximizes the chances for independence, productivity, and participation in an integrated society for each moderately or severely handicapped student who graduates.

In order for both teams to accomplish their goals, they must first individually and then collectively realize the problems and the consequences of not solving them. Second, they must make a commitment, again first individually and then collectively, to do something about the problems (Maddox & Edgar, 1985). As mentioned earlier, transition planning must be valued by each member of the teams if effective transitioning is to occur. The problems that are identified are very rarely the result of a single "player" but rather the cumulative effects of shortcomings among several agencies. For example, the nonexistence of small residential options in a given community may be the result of adult service agencies not perceiving a need for such alternatives, the schools not preparing the students to function in such environments, and/or parents not encouraging adult providers to develop the residences because they have always assumed that their disabled son/daughter would remain with them at home.

Garner and Inge (1985) suggest some effects of territoriality and competition on the transition process:

(1) "Turf building" among team members often results in disciplines hoarding areas of expertise rather than sharing responsibilities and knowledge;

(2) Clients may receive a variety of services but in a sequence that decreases or impedes their effectiveness;

(3) Clients may be treated inconsistently with each discipline applying its treatment strategies based on its own perception of the client's needs; and,

(4) Decisions may be made based on insufficient or inaccurate information because competing disciplines do not share information completely.

While it may seem unrealistic to assume that competition and territoriality within and between agencies can be eliminated, there are some ways to minimize the time and energy spent "...promoting the status, power, influence, resources, and control..." of team members' departments and agencies (Garner & Inge, 1985, p. 68). First, emphasize to members that the team's focus is on <u>transition</u> and not on any one agency or provider. Both the requirements accompanying P. L. 94-142 and federal initiatives since that time have established the need for local education and adult agencies to work collaboratively with one another. What seems to have been missing in many of the interagency agreements developed in the past is the "human factor." Transition efforts should benefit individuals first, and perhaps agencies second.

A second manner in which cooperative efforts can be encouraged among team members is to encourage the teams to focus first on real, everyday problems that may be accompanied by simple low-cost solutions (Edgar & Maddox, 1983). Perhaps one of the problems that has been identified in the transition process is a general lack of awareness among school personnel of adult service agencies' eligibility criteria and missions. This is a problem that has an easy, low-cost solution. Sending and receiving agencies need to know about one another's programs. A school in-service day could be reserved for an exchange of information between the special education personnel and representatives from adult service agencies. A similar offering could be arranged for parents who oftentimes are not aware of what adult services are available and how to access them. If teams are able to work cooperatively to solve these types of problems first, the more complex problems that follow have a better chance of being tackled through cooperative rather than competitive efforts.

A third suggestion to encourage cooperative efforts is to focus on individual students or groups of students initially. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Core Transition Team may want to target a small group of students with whom to initiate the transition process. While their tasks are much broader in scale than dealing with individual students, this type of focus may prevent team members from getting overwhelmed with proposed changes in their individual agencies. The Individualized Transition Team will, by their very mission, focus attention on a single student. This narrow focus may help to direct both teams to the human element rather than allowing issues to become agency-related. Leaders within both teams should be constantly aware of this human focus and bring members back to this center as often as is needed during the course of transition planning.

Interagency cooperation and collaboration should be a measurable outcome of the transition process. The transition process that is implemented by the Individualized Transition Teams should reflect the cooperative agreements that have been established by the Core Transition Team. These cooperative agreements should be as specific as possible in relation to at least the following dimensions: (1) area of responsibility (e.g., vocational training); (2) when responsibility is assumed and by whom; (3) what services will be provided and for what duration; (4) what funding restrictions exist; and (5) what eligibility criteria must be met in order to receive services.

Client Outcomes

The second type of outcomes that ought to be derived from transition efforts are those that involve the actual environments and experiences afforded to individuals who enter the adult arena. These types of outcomes will certainly be affected by the types of interagency agreements that are developed and by the degree to which teams work cooperatively, rather than competitively to solve transition problems. Client outcomes can and should, however, be measured apart from the level and extent of interagency cooperation and agreement. That is, the results of follow-up studies should not be mitigated by the fact that adult agencies have not yet developed agreements with the schools or between themselves. Rather, results should be utilized by consumers and advocates to hasten the development of such agreements and collaboration.

One of the major goals of developing the transition process is to increase the possibility that graduates' needs will be matched with available resources. Transition efforts do not all lead to the same end for every individual, nor should they. In order to ensure that every individual with a moderate or severe disability that leaves

the schools will be able to access services that meet their individual needs, a broad array of services must be available. In most communities, it is the broadening of available resources that will receive the most emphasis from the Core Transition Team. P. L. 94-142 set forth the concept of "continuum of services" by suggesting that a variety of educational placements should be available for students based, not upon their disability or label, but upon their individual needs.

The concept underlying the continuum of services, whether in the educational or adult arena, is that program services decrease in frequency and intensity as the person displays greater and greater degrees of independence. The intent behind establishing a continuum of services is that individuals will move within the continuum (i.e., move from one type of service to another) and, thereby closer to independence. As illustrated in Figure 9, minimum independence is associated with maximum program services, while maximum independence is associated with minimum program services under the continuum model. This method of service delivery frequently translates into maximum services being provided in the most segregated and restrictive environments, while minimum services are delivered in more integrated, less restrictive environments (Rudrud et al., 1984). Unfortunately, the continuum model does not lead to greater independence for all individuals...particularly those who are moderately or severely handicapped. For many individuals, movement through a continuum of services is virtually nonexistent and therefore very little progress is made towards independence. Rather than developing services along a continuum, communities need to establish an array of services. The array of services model (Johnson, 1982) is one which does not relate an individual's independence to where and how she/he receives services. Rather, the individual is afforded the opportunity to live, work, and recreate in integrated environments regardless of how independent they are in those environments. Support systems that are required to maintain individuals in integrated environments are identified and provided in those same environments. As the person's needs change, so can the support systems.

The array of services model of service delivery is an alternative to the more traditional continuum of services model and offers individuals with moderate and severe disabilities opportunities to maximize their independence, productivity, and participation. The section which follows suggests an array of services for each of the adult life spaces (i.e., domains). The array of services will include service options that range from least desirable to most desirable. These value judgments will be assigned based upon a combination of research findings, opinions of recognized experts in the disability field, deductive reasoning on the part of the author, and the results of current state-of-the-art programming nationally.

The Residential Array of Services

While private and state owned institutions continue to house large numbers of individuals with disabilities in this country, there has been an attempt during the last 20 years to return some of these individuals to their communities to live. It has been established that the great majority of individuals housed at this most restrictive end of the residential array can also be served at a lesser restrictive end of the array (Hill et al., 1983; Hill et al., 1982). It has also been established that once moved to the less restrictive end of the array, there is noticeable improvement in their functioning levels (Close, 1977; Conroy et al., 1982).

At the other end of the residential service array is the type of integrated supported apartment living provided through agencies such as Options in Community

Living, Inc., in Madison, Wisconsin. Options, Inc., is an apartment living and support program for adults with developmental disabilities who desire independent or semi-independent community living arrangements. Since 1974, Options has served clients in apartments rented on the open market and scattered throughout the city. Agency staff assist clients in finding an apartment, locating a roommate, moving in, learning to prepare meals, budget money, etc., and then either finds or provides whatever support services are necessary for the individual to remain in the community.

In addition to the congregate living offered by a state institution and the supported apartment concept offered by agencies such as Options, Inc., the residential array consists of the following alternatives (in descending order of restrictiveness): skilled nursing and intermediate care facilities (SNFs and ICFs), community-based ICF/MR programs, supervised group and apartment living, foster care, semi-independent living, and independent living or living at home. Communities which continue to provide residential alternatives only in the more restrictive end of the array need to develop alternatives that represent wider options. This is not to suggest, however, that all levels of the array need to be available in every community. What is suggested by the literature and current research, however, is that less restrictive residential options need to be made available for individuals who are characterized as moderately and severely handicapped if they are to continue to benefit from the public school education they received and are to achieve the type of independence that they are capable of.

The Vocational Array of Services

Vocational placement has been the most frequently cited outcome measure for transition efforts to date. As such, the vocational options that make up the array of services available to most moderately and severely handicapped individuals have received a good deal of scrutiny and analysis during the past several years. The literature is filled with descriptions, advantages, disadvantages, cost analyses, etc., for the various vocational outcomes and this text will not repeat what has already been done. The reader is referred to Bellamy et al. (1983), "Work and Work-Related Services: Postschool Options" for a summary of the vocational outcomes most often associated with persons with moderate or severe disabilities. It should be noted, however, that the vocational options traditionally available to moderately and severely handicapped adults have been offered along a continuum model of service delivery.

The first federal investment in assisting and supporting citizens with handicaps came with the Soldier's Rehabilitation Act in 1918. This legislation was passed in response to the large numbers of disabled veterans from World War I. Since that time, there has been a gradual extension of vocational services to individuals with disabilities and today there is a rather wide range of alternatives along the continuum. As with the residential array, those options which have been proven to be overly restrictive for many individuals with moderate and severe disabilities are considered less desirable than those alternatives which show promise for maximizing independence, productivity, and participation in society.

At one end of the array of vocational outcomes is the absence of any type of postschool vocational placement at all. For many young adults with moderate and severe disabilities who graduate from high school, their "gift" is to be placed on a waiting list for the local sheltered workshop. A study conducted by McDonnell et al. (1986) indicated that 91% of the respondents in their national survey of adult service providers had substantial waiting lists for vocational services. Waiting lists contained

anywhere from 40 to 1400 names. Similar findings have been reported by McDonnell and Wilcox (1983).

At the other end of the continuum of vocational options is competitive employment. Individuals with moderate or severe disabilities are not likely to be capable of independently locating competitive employment and/or maintaining that employment over time. Emerging models of supported employment, however, have demonstrated that individuals with moderate and severe disabilities can work in the community...if they are given the chance and the right type of support. Supported employment is defined as:

> ...paid employment which: (1) is for persons with developmental disabilities for whom competitive employment at or above the minimum wage is unlikely and who, because of their disabilities, need intensive ongoing support to perform in a work setting; (2) is conducted in a variety of settings, particularly worksites in which persons without disabilities are employed; and (3) is supported by any activity needed to sustain paid work by persons with disabilities, including supervision, training, and transportation. (Developmental Disabilities Act, 1984)

Supported employment becomes an appropriate option for any individual who, due to the functional limitations imposed by one or more disabilities, would: (1) not be expected to achieve unassisted competitive employment in the community; (2) require intensive on-the-job training in excess of 60 days; and (3) require ongoing, possibly lifelong, support and supervision to maintain a job placement. The definition of supported employment excludes individuals who can work on their own after a period of vocational rehabilitation, but structures no minimum ability levels. That is, supported employment has no entry requirements analogous to the minimal feasibility criterion in vocational rehabilitation.

A supported work approach to employment emphasizes structured assistance in job placement and job site training (Wehman, 1981). A job coach or coordinator is available for as long as needed to train, supervise, and provide ongoing support in work-related areas such as transportation and interactions with nondisabled coworkers, customers, and supervisors. Supported employment represents a "bridge" that has not been available before in that it provides for ongoing as opposed to time-limited support. In the past, many individuals characterized as moderately or severely handicapped were excluded from community-based vocational programs because they were believed to be too disabled to benefit from them. Today, supported employment programs across the nation are demonstrating that not only can persons with moderate and severe disabilities benefit from community vocational placements, but society can benefit as well (Hill & Wehman, 1983; Mank et al., 1986).

The vocational continuum contains basically three options between supported employment and unemployment. The first is the sheltered workshop. Department of Labor regulations require that clients served in sheltered workshops earn no less than 50% of minimum wage when working. The availability of a continuous flow of work, however, is oftentimes problematic for sheltered workshops and their employees may have their "work day" supplemented by classes, field trips into the community, and/or large group recreational outings.

The second vocational option, and the one assigned to many individuals with more severe handicaps, is the work activities center. Work activities centers are defined as:

> ...a physically separated department of a workshop...planned and designed exclusively to provide therapeutic activities for handicapped workers whose physical or mental impairment is so severe as to make their productive capacity inconsequential. Therapeutic activities include custodial activities (such as basic skills of living) and any purposeful activity so long as work is not the main purpose. (Federal Register, 1974, p. 17509)

The third option available to individuals who enter the adult arena is the adult day program. Adult day programs exist under a variety of labels, depending upon the part of the country one is in. They may be referred to as activity centers, adult day activity programs, or developmental centers. There are generally no vocational services offered and programs focus on basic education, motor skills, socialization, communication abilities, and basic work orientation. The expectation is that these individuals lack occupational readiness skills and the type of training provided will enable them to eventually move on to a sheltered workshop or activity center.

Although the three options described above may look very different, they share common characteristics. The first characteristic shared by sheltered workshops, activity centers, and adult day programs is that they provide services in "handicapped only" environments. All the workers who are receiving "training" are handicapped and, therefore, opportunities to interact with nonhandicapped peers, except those who are paid to be in the facility, is almost non-existent. Secondly, systematic strategies are not developed to assist clients in making transitions to less restrictive environments. There is very little "upward mobility" within any of these options. Reports on interprogram movement suggest that only 2-4% of individuals move either from work activity centers to sheltered workshops or from sheltered workshops into community employment in a year's time (Bellamy et al., 1983). Consider the following facts (Rudrud et al., 1984):

(1) Movement within the continuum (e.g., from work activities to regular work programs) seems to average around 3% annually;

(2) Based on these movement data, mentally retarded individuals in adult day programs would average between 47 and 58 years to move through the continuum into employment.

A third characteristic shared by these vocational alternatives is the lack of opportunity to earn meaningful wages. An average annual wage of $661 for sheltered workshop employees and $288 for those in work activity centers was reported in 1979 by the Department of Labor and data does not differ significantly almost a decade later. Persons with handicaps in all types of programs across the continuum earn an average of $.80 per hour. As Whitehead (1979) suggests, wages in sheltered workshops are so low that society may choose a total welfare instead of sheltered work and work preparation. Schneider et al. (1981) compared the cost of supported employment versus the cost of maintaining similar individuals in sheltered workshops and concluded that the costs of employment training were recovered within 2 years of successful placement. Sheltered workshops, however, would always operate at a cost to society.

The vocational continuum looks very different from one end to the other. The outcome of the transition process for individuals with moderate and severe disabilities ought to be employment, and communities need to provide graduates with several alternatives from which to choose. More explicitly, vocational outcomes should include options that have a high probability of maximizing productive potential. There

is too broad a range of individuals leaving the schools to have available only an adult activity center that focuses on daily living skills, or a workshop that provides only benchwork-contracted services. Options need to be available that provide meaningful wages and integration in the workplace. Not all stops along the array can promise this.

The Recreation/Leisure and Community-at-Large Array of Services

Leisure time is that time not spent in work or other required tasks. It is time that is discretionary in nature. That is, leisure activities are based on individual choice and as such are "...free to vary on an almost endless basis as a function of choice and performance..." (Voeltz et al., 1982, p. 176).

For a long time, special educators and parents were not concerned about teaching students with moderate and severe disabilities leisure and community functioning skills. There was little thought given to nonschool and postschool use of leisure time by these students. To a large extent, this lack of leisure skill and community training was due to the belief that students were sent to school to "learn" and not to "play." The results of the follow-up studies discussed in Chapter 2 spurred educators to realize that the recreation/leisure and community "life spaces" were being sadly ignored in their curriculum. Graduates were experiencing inordinate amounts of dead time, or time spent in passive, aimless activity. Graduates were not accessing community environments such as restaurants, shopping malls, and grocery stores.

In recent years, special educators have realized that skill training in the recreation/leisure and community domains is at least as important as training in the domestic and vocational domains. As in these other domains, curricula offered to students in the recreation/leisure and community domains must be designed to prepare them to function as independently and as productively as possible in a wide variety of postschool integrated environments. Ford et al. (1980) delineates 19 dimensions to consider when developing recreation/leisure curricula for individual students. Among the most relevant to transition planning are:

(1) chronological age appropriateness;
(2) number of persons involved;
(3) number of environments;
(4) the specialized nature of supervision and facilities;
(5) parental preferences and determinations;
(6) student preferences;
(7) cost;
(8) transportation; and
(9) social interactions

These dimensions provide some basis for evaluating the outcomes of transition efforts and for establishing what options should exist for graduates along the recreation/leisure and community continuums.

At one end of the array would be those options that allow for participation in recreation/leisure and other community environments and activities that are designed for only persons with disabilities. While there is certainly nothing wrong with providing opportunities for leisure activities that involve other individuals with disabilities, these should not be the <u>only</u> options available in any given community. Too often, community facilities and activities are set aside for purposes of servicing only

individuals with handicaps on a particular day or during certain hours (e.g., handicapped swimming periods at YMCA). To many parents, group home managers, and other caretakers, this type of "special" arrangement sends a clear message that people with disabilities are not encouraged to participate at other times in that environment or activity. By allocating staff that would ordinarily be used during these "special" times to times and activities utilized by nonhandicapped individuals, more integration could be achieved. Agencies and organizations that are currently providing specialized services to persons with handicaps in a community, and doing so in segregated environments and activities, should reexamine the level of support required by participants. In doing so, efforts could be made to provide that same level of support in more integrated environments.

At the other end of the array would be options that allow for maximal participation in leisure and community activities engaged in by nondisabled same-age peers in natural environments (e.g., parks or recreational facilities). This would include such activities as attending swimming classes with nondisabled individuals at a local YMCA, utilizing neighborhood community centers, libraries, bowling alleys, etc., independently and at the same time as nonhandicapped citizens in the community do.

Between these two ends of the array are options that involve some degree of support from the community service providers. If transition plans are to be implemented that are consistent with the principle of normalization, then attempts must be made to expand upon the environments and activities that can include persons with moderate and severe handicaps. This may involve expanding upon either the preservice or in-service training provided to recreational professionals and community service providers. The purpose of such training would be to familiarize this group with strategies that could be utilized to include persons with disabilities into activities/environments experienced by nonhandicapped individuals in their community.

The expansion of activities and environments provided to persons with disabilities might also involve developing alternative modes of transportation for those individuals who may not be able to access normal recreational activities and/or community/environments independently. While the issue of transportation may present a bigger barrier in rural areas, persons with disabilities often find themselves very isolated from recreational and community opportunities in urban areas as well. Specialized transportation systems will not be established in every community to provide services to persons with handicaps. Efforts need to be directed towards encouraging individuals to use public transportation and to access other means through networking efforts. This might include car pooling with others attending the same activity, asking family members to provide transportation, or creating a pool of individuals within service organizations (e.g., churches, Elk's Club, Rotary Club) that would be willing to transport individuals. Recreation/leisure options need to be made available that do not require extensive transportation needs so those individuals who are not able to access rides can still participate in recreational endeavors.

Another manner in which support systems may be developed to maximize the participation of persons in leisure and community pursuits is to develop a tutor or buddy system within universities, churches, or service organizations. One such program described by Salzberg and Langford (1981) was designed to foster leisure skill development through instruction while providing normalized activities with nondisabled peers. In this "companion" program, persons with disabilities were matched with nondisabled volunteers on the basis of mutual leisure preferences. Following an orientation session, the nondisabled individual accompanied his/her companion weekly to a mutually agreed upon activity in the community.

The outcomes in the recreation/leisure and community-at-large domains for persons exiting the school system and entering the adult arena should reflect a broad range of options. The recreation/leisure alternatives should include opportunities to participate in activities involving only other disabled individuals as well as opportunities for independent or supported involvement in integrated age-appropriate activities and environments. They should range from low or no cost activities to options involving a fee or membership. There should be activities and environments that can be accessed easily and others that may require coordination of transportation needs. The recreation/leisure and community options available to individuals with moderate and severe disabilities should be the same as those offered to nondisabled citizens in any community.

At the beginning of this chapter, it was suggested that a common "unit of measure" might be helpful in evaluating the outcomes of transition efforts with individuals who are moderately or severely handicapped... Perhaps the "unit" that would be most useful is "normalization"---

> ...making available to the mentally retarded patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close as possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream of society. (Nirje, 1969, p. 181)

The outcomes of transition efforts depend upon the options that are available upon graduation. The options that are available will depend, in turn, upon how interested the community is in getting a reasonable return on the time, money, and effort that has been invested in educating this population. If the only options available are those that maintain nonparticipation, nonproductivity, and continued dependence, the community and society as a whole will regain very little of its investment. If, on the other hand, the options that are made available include those that are as "close as possible to the norms and patterns" of nondisabled adults in the same community, the chances are much greater that the return will match the investment. One means of facilitating this "return on the investment" is to encourage that an array of service models replace the more traditional continuum model. The goals of the two models are the same. The manner in which they pursue the goals are very different.

Chapter 5

Barriers to Transition Planning

Will follow-up studies conducted ten years from now result in new data or will they reflect the same dismal results that were reported in Chapter 1? Will individuals with moderate and severe handicaps have a greater array of services available to them or will they still be working their way through the continuum that for many will lead nowhere? The answers to these and other questions concerning the future of transition efforts can be answered, in part, by discussing those barriers that inhibit effective transitioning.

Much has been written about the shortcomings of transitioning efforts to date and there is no short supply of suggestions on how to improve efforts that have fallen short, or worse yet, never gotten off the ground. Most of these suggestions involve reducing or eliminating barriers that are adversely affecting either the process or the products of transition efforts. The purpose of this chapter will be to discuss some of these barriers and to suggest means of alleviating their affects on transitioning.

Process Barriers

Perhaps the first process barrier is the uncertainty among school and adult providers concerning who is responsible for transitioning students? We have initiatives, priorities, authorization of funding for research, training, and demonstrations but no direct mandates as to when it should begin, who should initiate the effort, what it should look like, or what the outcomes of the process should be? There is no legislation mandating the formulation of a Core Transition Team or requirements to assign a Transition Specialist or Coordinator in local educational agencies. In short, many transition efforts "fail" because they are never initiated.

One agency needs to assume responsibility for initiating the transition process and it seems logical to assign this task to the local educational agency (LEA). School personnel, in conjunction with parents, are the most familiar with students' current and future needs. School personnel have the most current data on levels of functioning, rates of progress, supervision needs, vocational interests, and parents' expectations for adult environments and experiences. LEAs should initiate the transition process through the formulation of a Core Transition Team as described in Chapter 3. The individuals selected for the Core Transition Team should represent not only a wide variety of disciplines and agencies, but should also be carefully selected based on their willingness to work collectively towards effective transitioning. Selecting members who clearly have no concern about the effects of non-existent or haphazard transition efforts would be counterproductive and frustrating to those members who are concerned about the future of their graduates.

A second process barrier is that of territoriality and competition among team members. In many instances, the formulation of a Core Transition Team or an Individualized Transition Team will be the first time that many of these individuals have sat down in the same room together. Up to this point, they may have been vying for the same funds, highly critical of one another's method of providing services, unaware of each other's responsibilities or eligibility criteria, etc... all of which can make for very tenuous working relationships. Time must be alloted in the initial planning

stages to allow for these "strange bedfellows" to become familiar with and trust one another. A strong leader will direct the group to their common goal and not permit territoriality and competition to sidetrack the mission of developing transition goals, objectives, processes, and products that meet the individual needs of students approaching graduation. Again, careful selection of team members can go a long way in ensuring high levels of cooperation and collaboration.

A third process barrier involves personnel preparation, particularly at the high school level. As discussed in Chapter 3, the first step in the transition process is to build within students a firm foundation of functional, adult-referenced skills. In order to accomplish this, high school teachers and related personnel should be trained to develop and implement curriculum that has as its focus the demands of adult life. The training and experience of many high school special education teachers do not parallel this need in many parts of the country. Results of a study conducted by Halpern (1985) indicated that, while more than half of the high school special education teachers surveyed had earned a master's degree, nearly 40% had received their teaching certification in elementary education. The consequences of this finding were expressed quite well by one of the teachers surveyed:

> My training made no distinctions between working in the secondary school level and the elementary level. (p. 485)

Many states have standards which require teachers of individuals with handicaps to be specially trained for the work they do. However, over two-thirds of the states do not require evidence of special preparation in the form of a certification to teach secondary special education students (Beason, 1982). The training received by most special educators in this country has focused primarily on kindergarten through the sixth grade. And yet, many of these teachers are teaching at the high school level. Clearly, the message given by certifying teachers in special education K-12, but providing only elementary grade training is that the methods, procedures, and objectives don't really change much, if at all, as students get older. If special education teachers are required to secure certification for teaching at the secondary level, the added preparation is oftentimes in a content area such as English or social studies. It should not be surprising that special education teachers whose training focused on elementary content, methods, and outcomes often are found utilizing curricula with high school students that is largely developmentally based, age-inappropriate, and nonpreparatory in nature.

Teachers need to be specifically trained to provide students with curricula that focuses upon the demands of adult life. High school teachers need to receive training that prepares them to work with adult agencies, employers, and parents in such a way that students are transitioned to the least restrictive environments possible when they graduate. A secondary level certification should be developed by states to ensure that there is a higher correspondence between "state-of-the-art" curricula and "state-of-the-practice."

A second issue with personnel preparation that leads to process barriers is the narrowness of many training programs. The transition process described in preceding chapters requires a high degree of team work. In order for individuals to work effectively together toward a common goal, attitudinal and philosophical differences between professions needs to be understood and resolved. One means of decreasing the differences that exist between professionals is to provide more interdisciplinary training at the pre-service level. Chadsey-Rusch (1984) suggest that:

> ...special education teachers needed more training in the areas of vocational preparation and career education, as well as more information related to business. Vocational teachers needed more preparation in special education, and in particular, needed more training in the area of instructional strategies to use with handicapped youth. The private sector was identified as needing more information and training regarding the abilities and needs of handicapped individuals. And finally, future leadership personnel (particularly teacher educators) were mentioned as needing to be prepared to implement and teach the components of the transition process. (p. 58)

In addition to providing a more interdisciplinary pre-service approach to teachers, other service personnel could benefit from in-service trainings that included the scope of services and community resources that could enhance the transition process. Adult service agency representatives from such areas as vocational rehabilitation, mental health and developmental disabilities, school administrators, parents, and employers need to become aware of the array of service options that are being made available nationally to persons with moderate and severe disabilities.

Product/or Outcome Barriers

A second type of barrier to effective transitioning involves the activities and environments that are available to persons with moderate and severe disabilities when they enter the adult arena. It was suggested in Chapter 4 that an "array of services" model be developed in communities rather than a continuum model. In order for this type of model to be implemented, however, the disincentives for providing more "normalized" environments and experiences needs to be identified and reduced. In the vocational area, Conley et al. (1986) suggests that income support and health care programs create work disincentives in at least three different ways:

(1) by reducing the net gain from work;

(2) by fostering dependency and negative attitudes toward work; and

(3) by offering greater income security to persons who continue as beneficiaries of these programs than could be obtained in regular employment.

Most of the income support (e.g., SSI) and health care programs serving persons with disabilities are based on the misconception that the population can be neatly divided into those individuals who can work and those who either cannot work or whose prospective earnings are inconsequential. Rather than placing a high priority on assisting individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain gainful employment, many aspects of current services and programs actually impede this goal.

Consider the dual effects of the Intermediate Care Facilities for the Mentally Retarded (ICF/MR) Program on both residential options and vocational incentives. States have a strong incentive to place persons with disabilities into more restrictive, larger, residential facilities through this program because it pays all reasonable costs of providing care. One of the conditions that determines eligibility for the ICF/MR program is that residents be in need of 24-hour-a-day care. The determination of who needs 24-hour-a-day care can be very unreliable and individuals who may be capable of gainful employment are prohibited from seeking it if they wish to remain in the residential program.

Conley et al. (1986) and Conley (1985) present very thorough discussions on the impact of various federal programs on employment and residential options for persons with disabilities. From reviewing their analyses, clearly what is missing is a more holistic approach to providing services to persons with disabilities in this country. Persons with moderate and severe disabilities often receive services from more than one program. Unfortunately, the planning, eligibility and outcome requirements, funding patterns and restrictions, etc. for these programs appear to be developed in isolation from one another. This continues to occur even though programs have very definite interactive effects with one another. A more holistic approach to developing and offering services needs to occur not only for employment and residential services, but for recreation, transportation, and in any other area where persons with disabilities may need assistance.

One additional barrier that affects outcomes for individuals transitioning from the schools to adulthood is the continued lack of community acceptance of this population. While significant improvements have been made in the last decade, much more needs to be accomplished. As Lakin and Bruininks (1985) suggest, tolerance and acceptance are not one and the same. Tolerance may have been sufficient to initiate the process of integrating persons with disabilities into their home communities, but the process will only be culminated by attaining acceptance for this population. Perhaps the best way to accomplish this is to promote continued and frequent direct interactions between persons with disabilities and their fellow nonhandicapped citizens. This is perhaps the best form of community education that can be offered and one that can be aided by parents, school personnel, and adult service providers as they provide experiences in a variety of integrated community environments.

The barriers to effective transitioning discussed in this chapter are by no means an exhaustive list. Rather, the attempt was made to suggest some very common and universal challenges to transition efforts. The suggested remedies were offered not as prescriptions, but rather as attempts at problem solving; readers undoubtedly have additional suggestions for many of the identified barriers. What is important is to <u>begin</u> the transition process and identify barriers and solutions along the way. Parents, school personnel, and adult service providers cannot allow themselves to be "not ready for" the transition process. Lakin and Bruininks (1985) remind us that:

> There is much to learn in bringing about the successful physical, social and productive integration of the over 125,000 severely/profoundly impaired developmentally disabled persons in large isolated residential settings, of the over 250,000 children and youth who attend school in settings that provide no contact with nonhandicapped peers, of the tens of thousands of day activity and sheltered work center employees who should be working in real job settings, of the hundreds of thousands of developmentally disabled persons living at home with inadequate social, leisure, and recreational activities. In advocating for the integration of these persons into community living, spokespersons must accept responsibility for continuing to learn more about how such integration can be accomplished successfully. (p. 328)

Chapter 6

Transition - A Case Study

Becky received her first five years of special education in a segregated school. All the students in her school were mentally disabled and ranged in ages from 5-21. During these first five years, she was provided with a curriculum that was very similar to that of a kindergarten or first grade student. She spent time learning her colors, how to county objects, printing the letters of the alphabet, and learning to read in the Ginn basal readers. She also spent time during the day working on gross motor skills like jumping and hopping, on communication skills like asking and answering who, what, where, and when questions and on hygiene skills like washing her hands and face.

At home, very few demands were put on Becky. She was the youngest of three children and the only child still living at home with her parents. Becky's parents continued to do things for her that the teachers claimed she could do for herself like dress in the morning, tie her own shoes, pour her own milk for cereal, and brush her teeth. Becky's mother insisted that these tasks were easier for her to do and besides, Becky really didn't like doing these things herself.

When Becky was ten, the school district made the decision to begin integrating students with moderate and severe disabilities into schools serving nonhandicapped students. Becky's class was selected as the pilot group. A new teacher was assigned to her class that had just graduated from a teacher training program at a nearby university. This particular training program prepared teachers to develop and implement curricula that was based not on the traditional developmental model but on the demands of adult life. The new teacher's training prepared her to work with small groups of students, not only in the classroom, but also out in natural environments such as grocery stores, restaurants, libraries, and shopping malls.

Prior to Becky's move to the elementary school, the new teacher asked all the parents in the class to meet with her and the special education administrator to discuss the new placement and the type of instructional program that would be offered. A rationale for the changes, both in placement and curricular focus, were provided to the parents. The new teacher gave a brief description of the type of programming that she would be providing. Several of the parents had questions and concerns about the new approach as well as fears about their sons/daughters being placed in an integrated school setting for the first time. The special education administrator had arranged with a school district in another state that had implemented a similar program to act as host to parents who were interested in seeing firsthand the type of program that was being described. Several parents signed up to go on the visit.

Becky remained at the new elementary school until she and the others in her class were between 11 and 12 years old. During the time she spent in the integrated elementary school, she received instruction in such things as: using a pocket calculator to purchase grocery and menu items, crossing controlled and uncontrolled intersections, riding the city bus, reading important words in her environments, using vending machines, asking service personnel for assistance in locating store items, and learning what time to leave for those classes where she was integrated with same-age peers in another part of the school (e.g., physical education, art, music, library). Becky also continued to learn how to count but was counting grocery items taken

from a bag rather than plastic bears and blocks. She continued to learn personal hygiene skills, but was practicing these at her teacher's apartment rather than in the nurse's office. She was continuing to learn how to read but was reading grocery lists, menus, environmental signs, and simple cooking directions rather than the Ginn pre-primer.

By this time, the special education administrator had negotiated a classroom in the middle school and Becky's class moved to that placement. A second group of students from the segregated school took their place at the elementary school. The instructional program at the middle school continued to emphasize those skills that students would need to function as independently as possible when they were adults. Becky spent at least two to three half days each week away from school. She and one or two other students would be accompanied by an instructor to such places as restaurants, grocery stores, libraries, bowling alleys, and shopping malls to practice the skills that they had been learning in the classroom. One morning a week she spent at the home of one of her classmates. Here she would practice domestic skills such as housekeeping, hygiene skills, and meal preparation. Her classmate's parents would help teach one small group of students while the teacher and an aide were teaching others. Becky was also beginning to learn vocational skills as she was going with two other students to a nearby church to assemble the weekly newsletter.

When Becky turned 14, the classroom teacher met with her parents for purposes of initiating transition planning. Becky's parents were encouraged to do some serious thinking in terms of what they would like the future to hold for their daughter. They were asked to fill out a questionnaire that would reflect their concerns and expectations for where Becky would live, work, and recreate as an adult. Becky's parents were also encouraged at this time to begin contacting local adult service providers and the local Developmental Disabilities Board on a yearly basis to inform them of the type of services that Becky would need after she graduated from school at age 21. The classroom teacher organized an Individualized Transition Team for Becky consisting initially of herself, the speech therapist, Becky's parents and Becky. An Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) was developed across four life spaces: vocational, domestic, leisure, and community-at-large. Goals were developed by the Transition Team that reflected the parent's expectations for Becky as an adult and procedures to implement each goal were delineated.

When Becky turned 16, she began attending a self-contained classroom in the local high school. Her ITP had been reviewed annually by the Transition Team and progress on the objectives noted. Becky's parents had changed their mind about wanting her to attend the local sheltered workshop when she graduated as they had seen her success at community worksites for the past four years. The ITP was modified to include community-based vocational placement upon graduation. Becky's Individualized Transition Team was also expanded at this time to include the school district's transition teacher, representatives from a residential service provider, a counselor from the division of vocational rehabilitation and a representative from the county human services department that provides funding for adult services. Becky's final ITP is illustrated in Figures 9, 10, 11, and 12.

INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLAN

Student: Becky S.

Age: 18

Domain: Recreation/Leisure

Student Objective	School/Teacher Action	Parent/Guardian Action	Adult Service Agency Action
1) Becky will learn how to utilize and access at least the following environments a) YMCA b) shopping malls c) movie theatres d) roller skating rinks 2) Becky will acquire skills that enable her to engage in at least the following recreational activities in her home: a) simple card games b) board games c) hobby-type activity d) listening to records/tapes e) playing video-games	1) Continue skill training in the following environments: a) YMCA b) shopping malls c) roller skating rink 2) Continue mobility and bus training a) from school to recreation environments b) from home to recreation environments 3) Continue to expand the repertoire of leisure activities Becky can engage in in the home setting. 4) Continue instruction in using adaptations as needed to facilitate greater independence.	1) Facilitate Becky and her friends planning, accessing, and utilizing at least the following environments: a) YMCA b) shopping malls c) movie theatres d) roller skating rinks 2) Provide materials/equipment in the home and encourage Becky to engage in the following activities: a) simple card games b) board games c) hobby-type activities d) listening to records/-tapes e) playing videogames 3) Provide instruction on playing videogames on home computer 4) Encourage use of adaptations that have been developed for Becky.	YMCA - Examine eligibility requirements for classes offered, staffing patterns of offerings to "special" populations for purposes of allocating staff to support integration of disabled and nondisabled.

Figure 9. Individualized Transition Plan for the Recreation/Leisure Domain.

INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLAN

Student: Becky S.

Age: 18

Domain: Community-at-Large

Student Objective	School/Teacher Action	Parent/Guardian Action	Adult Service Agency Action
Becky will learn how to utilize and access at least the following environments as independently as possible: a) fast food restaurants b) sit down restaurants c) grocery stores d) banks e) shopping malls	1) Continue skill training in the following environments to maximize independence: a) restaurants b) grocery stores c) banks d) shopping malls 2) Continue mobility and bus training a) from school to community environments b) from home to community environments 3) Continue instruction in using adaptations as needed to facilitate greater independence.	1) Facilitate Becky's use of community environments during non-school times. 2) Encourage use of adaptations that have been developed for Becky.	None at this time.

Figure 10. Individualized Transition Plan for the Community-At-Large Domain.

INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLAN

Student: Becky S.

Age: 18

Domain: Vocational

Student Objective	School/Teacher Action	Parent/Guardian Action	Adult Service Agency Action
Becky will be employed in the community at least 20 hours per week. She will work in an environment that contains non-disabled coworkers, supervisors, and/or customers. She will take the city bus to and from work.	1) Continue bus training from a) school to community training sites, and b) home to vocational sites 2) Continue mobility training for purposes of teaching street crossing skills at controlled and uncontrolled intersections. 3) Continue community-based vocational training at integrated work sites. Becky will receive community vocational training for at least 4 half days per week by the time she graduates. 4) Adaptations will be developed as necessary to maximize independent performance. 5) Develop and maintain cumulative record of Becky's vocational placements, progress, concerns and recommendations for future vocational placement.	1) Assign Becky regular jobs around the home to perform on a daily basis. 2) Notify the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and local social service agency of goal for Becky upon graduation and anticipated date of graduation.	1) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Assign Becky a counselor for purposes of: a) attending ITP meetings and becoming familiar with long term vocational objectives b) providing information regarding existing agencies that provide community-based vocational support c) allocating funds to support Becky for maximum of 1 year following graduation 2) County human service agency Assign case manager to Becky for purposes of a) attending ITP meetings and becoming familiar with vocational goals and the type of support required, b) allocating funds to provide long-term support in community-vocational placement, if needed, following period of DVR involvement.

Figure 11. Individualized Transition Plan for the Vocational Domain.

INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLAN

Student: Becky S.

Age: 18

Domain: Domestic

Student Objective	School/Teacher Action	Parent/Guardian Action	Adult Service Agency Action
Becky will live in a supported apartment with no more than 2 other similarly disabled young adults and one non-disabled roommate. She will participate in the following activities: · meal preparation · housekeeping · personal hygiene/grooming · clothing selection and maintenance · scheduling chores/responsibilities	1) Continue training the following domestic content areas: · simple meal preparation · housekeeping · personal hygiene/grooming · clothing selection/maintenance · sex education and family living Training will take place in school as well as at Domestic Training Apartment 2) Provide Becky with at least 3 opportunities to participate in overnight training at Domestic Training Apartment with 2-3 other students and Domestic Trainer.	1) Assign household chores involving housekeeping, meal preparation or laundry on weekly basis. 2) Facilitate at least monthly "sleep overs" with Becky's friends both at Becky's home and at her friends' homes. 3) Assist in selecting/suggesting possible roommate(s) for Becky and discussing possibilities with other parents. 4) Establish trust fund for Becky that can be utilized to partially fund community residential placement.	1) Assign Becky a Case Manager from county social service agency for purposes of: a) attending ITP meetings and becoming familiar with the long term objectives and support required, and b) allocating funds to support Becky in small community-based living environment upon graduation.

Figure 12. Individualized Transition Plan for the Domestic Domain.

Becky continued to receive instruction in both classroom and community environments and was spending increasingly greater amounts of time at community worksites with a vocational teacher. Her parents had registered Becky with the local division of vocational rehabilitation office and had been assigned a counselor. During Becky's last year of school, she received vocational training from the transition teacher at a local hotel where she was learning how to prepare items for the restaurant's salad bar. Several times during this last year, Becky's counselor from the division of vocational rehabilitation stopped in to see her working at the hotel and discussed her progress with the transition teacher.

After school and on weekends, Becky's parents facilitated her meeting friends and spending time together at the local YMCA, going to movies, shopping, out to lunch, or visiting at one another's house. Both Becky and her best friend have advocates that are about their same age that they recreate with on a regular basis.

When Becky graduated from high school at age 21, she was hired by the hotel to work 25 hours a week as a salad prep person. The transition teacher continued to provide supervision and training during the summer months following graduation, but by this time Becky required only minimal supervision. At the end of summer, the transition teacher withdrew her minimal supervision and the division of vocational rehabilitation contracted with a local vocational placement agency to provide the same level of support and supervision. New policies developed within DVR allowed for purchasing supported employment services (e.g., job coaching) for up to 1 year. If Becky were to continue to need supervision after this year, the cost of supervision would revert over to the county social service agency that is responsible for the long term support and care of individuals with developmental disabilities.

When Becky finishes work, she either meets friends and goes shopping, to the library, out to lunch, or goes home to her apartment that she shares with two other young women, one of whom is similarly disabled and one who is nondisabled. Becky's supported living arrangement is paid for through a combination of local social service dollars, SSI, parent contributions, and Becky's personal income. When Becky is at home, she spends her time watching television, listening to records, working on her cross stitch projects or calling friends and relatives on the telephone. When her other two roommates return home, she helps prepare dinner, may do laundry, or goes grocery shopping.

Becky is moderately mentally disabled, but unlike thousands of others like her who graduate from high schools across the country, she has had the benefit of transition planning and a community that is willing to provide environments and support systems that match her needs and abilities. Her community and society as a whole, are realizing benefits from their investment in this young lady. Human potential is not being wasted. In order to maximize success stories like Becky's, schools, adult service providers, and parents must work in concert to:

- design and implement longitudinal educational plans that focus on adult life needs;
- establish service systems that provide an array of options; and
- increase the level of cooperation and coordination between and among service providers.

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Appendix A

Parent/Guardian Transition Questionnaire: A Guide

Parent/Guardian Transition Questionnaire: A Guide

1. Have educational or other personnel talked with you about the postschool future of your son/daughter?

2. What do you want for your son/daughter during the next year, in 5 years, in 10 years?

   Recreation/Leisure:

   Vocational:

   Community:

   Domestic:

3. What most concerns you about the future of your son/daughter?

4. When your son/daughter made a transition in the past, e.g., from one school to another, what were the problems encountered, if any?

5. Are you presently in contact with any agencies that will or may be involved with your son/daughter after graduation?

6. Are you aware of any community agencies that will or might be involved with your son/daughter? Do you plan on making or maintaining contact with them?

7. What do you anticipate to be your level of involvement with your son/daughter upon graduation from high school? Is this acceptable to you?

8. With whom and where would you like your son/daughter to live? Specify the nature of the living situation, e.g., apartment, house, etc.

9. Where would you like your son/daughter to work? Specify the nature of the work.

10. What recreational/leisure facilities has your son/daughter utilized? Which ones would you like him/her to use upon graduation from high school?

(From L. Brown et al. (1982). Educational programs for severely handicapped students, XII. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin and Madison Metropolitan School District).

Appendix B

Follow-up Survey

DCSEA GRADUATE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

INTERVIEWER _____ DATE _____

GRADUATE'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ AGE _____

WHO PROVIDED INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONNAIRE _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Total years in DCSEA programs _____

DOMESTIC

Current Residence _____ Yrs. _____

Does _____ participate in the following activities of daily living?

	Yes/No	Level of Independence		Reasons		
		Independent	Dependent	Lacks Skill	Doesn't Allow	No Interest
Hygiene/ Grooming						
Clothing Care						
Clothing Selection						
House-keeping						
Meal Preparation						

In thinking back about your son's/daughter's schooling experience; what could the school have done to better prepare _____ for independent living? _____

_____

_____

_____

Future Plans

1. Are you aware of what types of alternative living situations are available to your son/daughter? _____

   _____

2. Do you think that there are adequate alternative living situations in this area for _____? Why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. What kind of alternative living situations for handicapped adults should be developed in this area to better meet their needs? _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. At some time in the future, do you see _____ living someplace else? _____ If no, why not? _____

   _____

   _____

COMMUNITY

General Community Functioning Skills	Access			Frequency			Level Ind.		Reasons			
	With Friend	With Adult	Independent	Frequent	Occasionally	Never	Independent	Dependent	Lacks Skills	Doesn't Allow	No Interest	Availability
Utilizes Community Services												
1. City bus												
2. Taxi												
3. VAC (Voluntary Act Ctr Bus)												
4. Rides bike												
5. Walks (crosses street)												
6. Public restroom												
7. Public telephone												
8. Barber/beauty												
9. Bank												
10. Other												
Utilizes Community Recreation												
11. Stores												
12. Shopping Centers												
13. Restaurants												
14. Movie theatres												
15. YMCA												
16. Parks/public pool												
17. Library												
18. Recreational facilities												
19. Bowling alley												
20. Rollerskating rink												
21. NIU												

In thinking back about your son's/daughter's schooling experience, what could the school have done to better prepare _____ to utilize the community? _____

_____

_____

_____

Has _____ established friendships with same aged peers within your community? Yes ____ No _____

Handicapped _____ Nonhandicapped _____

in another community? Yes ____ No _____

Handicapped _____ Nonhandicapped _____

If no, why (within your community) _____

_____

If no, why (in another community) _____

_____

How often do _____ and friends get together?

Weekly _____ Monthly _____

What types of activities do they engage in together?

Home	Community
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____

What does _____ typically do with his/her leisure time at home? (both after work and on weekends.) _____

_____

_____

_____

VOCATIONAL/FINANCIAL

Current Vocational Placement _____ What level? _____
Years _____ Hours of work per week _____
Hours in class per week _____ Classes _____
_____
_____

What are his/her work tasks? _____
_____

Income
How much does _____ earn? (average/monthly) _____
a. Work (average month last year) $ _____
b. Supplemental Income (SSI) $ _____
c. Allowance (family) $ _____
d. Other (specify source) $ _____

Major Expenses (Monthly)
a. Room and Board $ _____
b. Clothing $ _____
c. Transportation mode: _____ Cost $ _____
_____ Cost $ _____
_____ Cost $ _____

What do you think is the prime motivator(s) for _____'s work? (e.g., money, task, social, self-image) _____
_____

What does _____ do with his/her income?
_____ Puts into bank under own savings account
_____ Gives it to parents to handle
_____ Keeps at home and spends on personal items
_____ Keeps at home but doesn't spend
_____ Other (list) _____
_____

In thinking back about your son's/daughter's schooling experience, what could the school have done to better prepare _____ vocationally? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Could you discuss any specific aspects you like and aspects you do not like about _____'s placement at _____? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Ideally, where would you like to see _____ employed?

_____

What kind of job? _____

_____

(From Wheeler et al. (1983). A follow-up examination of severely handicapped graduates of the DeKalb County Special Education Association, 1978-1982. Northern Illinois University).

Appendix C

A Format for Organizing Individual Transition Objectives

A Format for Organizing Individual Transition Objectives and Student, Parent/Guardian, School and Related Agency Personnel Actions

DOMESTIC TRANSITION PLAN:

Student: _____
Age: _____
Years Remaining in School: 1

STUDENT OBJECTIVE	STUDENT RELATED ACTION	PARENT/GUARDIAN ACTION	SCHOOL OR TEACHER ACTION	ADULT SERVICE AGENCY ACTION
1. Long Term Goal Mary will live in a semi-supervised apartment and will be responsible for meal planning, purchasing, cooking, cleaning and self-care.	1. Mary should choose friend(s) with whom she would like to live.	1. Initiate or maintain ongoing communication with school and postschool domestic agency and aid in the determination of the least restrictive living environment, possible roommates, financial resources, etc. a. keep a log of all communications; b. examine options available; c. determine most appropriate placement for son/daughter;	1. Provide instruction in the actual future domestic environment or the closest approximation possible during the time period when student actions are necessary. In order to accomplish this, the school should: a. communicate strategies and progress to postschool agency and parents. Timeline ongoing; b. provide a "transition" teacher to work simultaneously with postschool agency personnel. Timeline - September; c. eventually transfer instructional responsibility to postschool agency personnel. Timeline - April.	1. Plan and attain funds for domestic environments and the necessary supervision for the student. Plan a strategy for attaining information from parents/guardians and school regarding previous intervention and progress: a. provide a staff member to work concurrently with school personnel involved in domestic training.
Timeline: December 15. Then review again.		2. On weekends parents and their son/daughter should utilize environments close to the future domestic site.		Timeline: April

COMMUNITY FUNCTIONING TRANSITION PLAN:

Student: _____
Age: _____
Years Remaining in School: 1

STUDENT OBJECTIVE	STUDENT RELATED ACTION	PARENT/GUARDIAN ACTION	SCHOOL OR TEACHER ACTION	ADULT SERVICE AGENCY ACTION
1. Mary will learn the route from present home to vocational site at the university hospital and will ride the bus independently. Timeline: 8 months.	1. Mary will be responsible for bringing her bus ticket and/or money daily and determining the correct time to "catch" the bus.	1. When convenient, accompany Kim on route on weekends.	1. Provide instruction 3 times each week to and from the vocational site.	1. None at this time.
2. When the future domestic environment has been selected and determined Mary will take the city bus or some other form of alternative transportation to vocational environment. Timeline: 8 months.	2. None at this time.	2. Explore transportation options available and accessible to domestic environment.	2. Provide instruction initially 3 times per week.	2. The person and agency responsible for domestic supervision will monitor functioning.
3. Mary will get up, get ready for school and prepare a simple breakfast with a minimal level of assistance. Timeline: 8 months.		3. Fade morning supervision to assure that Mary can be reasonably independent. - Get an alarm clock for Mary.	3. Continue to provide instruction on meal preparation.	3. None at this time.

(From L. Brown et al. (1982), Educational programs for severely handicapped students, XII. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin and Madison Metropolitan School District).